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"He picked his way, with much circumspection, between the prostrate forms of the tiny people."

Vol. I., p. 233.

THE OXONIAN

IN

THELEMARKEN;

OR,

NOTES OF TRAVEL IN SOUTH-WESTERN NORWAY

IN THE SUMMERS OF 1856 AND 1857.

WITH GLANCES AT THE LEGENDARY LORE
OF THAT DISTRICT.

BY

THE REV. FREDERICK METCALFE, M.A.,

FELLOW OF LINCOLN COLLEGE, OXFORD,

AUTHOR OF

"THE OXONIAN IN NORWAY."

32927

"Auf den Bergen ist Freiheit; der Hauch der Grüfte,
Steigt nicht hinauf in die schönen Lüfte,
Die Welt is volkommen übere[illegible],
Wo der Mensch nicht hinein kömmt mit seiner Qual."

"Tu nidum servas: ego laudo ruris amœni
Rivos, et musco circumlita saxa, nemusque."

IN TWO VOLUMES.
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THE

OXONIAN IN THELEMARKEN.

CHAPTER I.

Danish custom-house officials — Home sickness — The ladies of Denmark — Ethnological — Sweden and its forests—Influence of climate on Peoples—The French court—Norwegian and Danish pronunciation—The Swiss of the North—An instance of Norwegian slowness—Ingemann, the Walter Scott of Denmark—Hans Christian Andersen—Genius in rags—The level plains of Zealand—Danish cattle—He who moveth his neighbour's landmark—Beech groves—The tomb of the great Valdemar—The two queens—The Probst of Ringstedt—Wicked King Abel—Mormonism in Jutland—Roeskilde—Its cathedral—The Semiramis of the North — Frederick IV.—Unfortunate Matilda.

BEING desirous of proceeding to Copenhagen, I landed at Nyeborg; together with the Dane and his lady.

The steamer across to Korsör will start at four A.M., and so, it being now midnight, we must

sleep as fast as we can till then. The politeness of the Danish custom-house officials surpassed everything of the kind I ever encountered from that class. We put up at Schalburg's hotel. Mine host cozened us. I recommend no traveller to stop at his house of entertainment.

"Morgen-stund giv Guld i Mund," said the fair Dane to me, quoting a national proverb, as I pointed out to her the distant coast of Zealand, which a few minutes before was indistinctly visible in the grey dawn, now gilded with the sun.

She was quite in ecstasies at the thoughts of setting foot on her dear Zealand, and seeing its level plains of yellow corn and beechen groves, after the granite and gneiss deserts of Lapland and Finmark. Sooth to say, the Danish ladies are not infected with that deadly liveliness which characterizes many of the Norwegians; while, on the other hand, they are devoid of that bland facility and Frenchified superficiality which mark many of the Swedes. How is it that there is such a wide distinction between the Swede and the Norskman? Contrast the frank bluffness of the one; strong,

sterling, and earnest, without artifice and grace: and the supple and insinuating manner of the other. The very peasant-girl of Sweden steps like a duchess, and curtsies as if she had been an *habitué* of Almack's. Pass over the Borders, as I have done, from Trondjem Fjord through Jemteland, and at the first Swedish change-house almost, you are among quite a different population, profuse of compliments and civilities which they evidently look upon as all in the day's work, and very much disposed withal to have a deal with you—to sell you, for instance, one of their grey dog-skin cloaks for one hundred rix dollars. One is reminded, on the one hand, of the sturdy, blundering Halbert Glendinning; and on the other, of the lithesome, adroit Euphuist, Sir Piercie Shaftón. And yet, if we are to believe the antiquarians and ethnologists, both people are of pretty much the same stock: coming from the countries about the Black Sea, two centuries after Christ, when these were overrun by the Romans, and supervening upon the old Gothic or second migration. It may be said that the Norsk character caught

some parts of its colouring from the stern, rugged nurse in the embrace of whose mountains their lot has been cast; with the great backbone of primæval rock (Kiölen) splitting Norway in two, and rendering intercourse difficult. So that now you will hear a Norskman talk of Nordenfjelds (north of the mountains), and Söndenfjelds (south of the mountains), as if they were two distinct countries. But then, if the Swedes did live on a flatter country, and one apparently more adapted for the production of the necessaries of life, and so more favourable to the growth of civilization; yet it, too, presented obstacles almost equally insurmountable to the spread of refining arts and tastes.

They also used to talk, not like the Norwegians, of their north of the mountain and south of the mountain, but of their north of the forest (nordenskovs) and south of the forest (söndenskovs), in allusion to the impenetrable forests of Kolmorden and Tiveden, which divided the district about the Mälar Lake from the south and south-west of Sweden. And is it much better now? True, you have the canal that has pierced the country and

opened it out to culture and civilization; but even at the present day the climate of Sweden is less mild than that of Norway, and four-sevenths of the whole surface of the country are still covered by forests. In travelling from the Trondjem Fjord to the Gulf of Bothnia, I found myself driving for four consecutive days through one dense forest, with now and then a clearing of some extent; and as for the marshes, they are very extensive and treacherous. One day I saw two cranes not far from the road along which I was driving, and immediately stepped, gun in hand, off the causeway, to try and stalk them. But I was nigh becoming the victim; for at the first step on what looked like a grassy meadow, I plunged deep into a floating morass. A Swede who was my companion luckily seized me before I had played out the part of Curtius without any corresponding results.

The nation which has to fight with a cold climate and such physical geography as this, is not much better situated than the one which in a milder climate has to wring a subsistence from rocks, and which, to advance a mile direct, has to go up and down twain. Like those heroes and

pioneers of civilization in the backwoods, they both of them have to clench the teeth, and knit the brow, and stiffen the sinews, if they want to hold their own in the stern fight with nature. And this sort of permanent, self-reliant obduracy which by degrees gets into the blood, is by no means prone to foster those softer graces that bud forth under the warmth of a southern sky and in the lap of a richer soil, where none of the asperities generated by compulsion are requisite, but Dame Nature, with the least coaxing possible, listens to and rewards her suitors.

Why is it, then, that the manners of these two people are so different? People tell me it did not use to be so. The first and great reason, then, appears to be the different governments of the two countries; the absence of liberty and the excessive powers and number of the nobility in the one, and the abundance of liberty and absence of nobles in the other. The influence of rule upon the inhabitants of a country is, in the long run, as mighty as that of breed and blood.

Improbable as it may appear to some, I am inclined to lay great stress on the influence of a

French Court. Bernadotte, it is true, was the son of a plebeian, a notary of Pau; but he was a Frenchman, and every Frenchman is versatile, and gifted with external polish, at all events; and his Court was French, and Court influence did its work, penetrating to the very roots of society; so that by degrees the graces of the capital became engrafted on the obsequious spirit already engendered by long servitude among the Swedish population. At Christiania, on the contrary, there is no Court; the nobility are not, and the country is all but a republic. This is, I believe, a part solution of the problem—a "guess at truth." While on this subject, I may as well refer to the difference between the pronunciation of Danish and Norwegian, though they are at present the same language. The vapid sweetness which your Dane affects in his articulation, is most distasteful after the rough and strenuous tongue of Norway. It is a case of lollipop to wholesome gritty rye-bread. The Dane, especially the Copenhagener, rolls out his words in a most lackadaisical manner, as if he were talking to a child. Mammas and papas will talk thus, we know, to their babies, the

language of endearment not being according to the rules of the Queen's English. At times I thought great big men were going to blubber, and were commiserating their own fate or that of the person addressed, when perhaps they were only asking what time the train started to Copenhagen, or whether the potato sickness had reappeared.

Going to the fore part of the steamer to get some English money turned into Danish, I find two of those Swiss of the North, Dalecarlian girls, on board. They are from Mora, and one is very pretty. The most noticeable feature in their costume is their short petticoats and red stockings. That most sprightly girl, Miss Diana Redshank, will at once perceive whence it is that we borrow the fashion now prevailing in England. As a matter of course, they were artists in hair, and they immediately produced their stock-in-trade—viz., specimens of bracelets, necklaces, and watch-chains, very well worked and very cheap. They have been from home all the summer, and are now working their way back. In winter they weave cloth and attend to the household duties. I bought a hair bracelet for three shillings.

As an instance of Norwegian slowness, I may mention that although the railway is opened from Korsör to Copenhagen, distant three hours, the Norwegian steamer still continues to stop at Nyeborg, on the further side of the Belt, thereby necessitating this trip across, and much additional delay, trouble, and expense.

The novels of Ingemann have made all these places classic ground. The Danes look on him as the Walter Scott of their country. He is now past seventy, and living in repose at the Academy of Sorö. Denmark sets a good example in the reward of literary merit.

Well do I remember, years ago, meeting a goggle-eyed young man, with lanky, dark hair, ungainly figure, and wild countenance, and nails just like filberts, at a table-d'hôte in Germany. All the dinner he rolled about his large eyes in meditation. This was Hans Christian Andersen, now enjoying a European reputation, and holding, with a good stipend, the sinecure of Honorary Professor at the University of Copenhagen. Hitherto he had been candle-snuffer at the metropolitan theatre, but his hidden talents had

been perceived, and he was being sent to Italy to improve his taste and get ideas at the public expense.

If we contrast the fate in England and in Denmark of genius in rags, we may be reminded of the märchen, told, if I remember, by Andersen himself, how that once on a time a little dirty duck was ignored by the sleek fat ducks around, when it meets with two swans, who recognised the seemingly dirty little duck, and protected it. Whereupon the astonished youngster happens to see himself in a puddle, and finds that he is a genuine swan.

What a contrast between these flat plains of Zealand, with the whitewashed cottages and farm-houses—the ridge of the thatched roof pinned down with straddles of wood—and the rocky wilds of Norway, its log-houses, red or yellow, with grass-covered roofs, nestling under a vast impending mountain. In Denmark, the highest land is only a few hundred feet above the sea. How immensely large, too, the cows and horses look after the lilliputian breeds of Norway. There being hardly any fences, the poor creatures are

generally tethered: yonder peasant girl with the great wooden mallet is in the act of driving in the iron tethering-pin.

No wonder that in a country so open, superstition was had recourse to to terrify the movers of their neighbour's landmarks. Thus the Jack-o'-Lanterns in the isle of Falster are nothing but the souls of dishonest land-measurers running about with flaming measuring-rods, and crying, "Here is the right boundary, from here to here!" Again, near Ebeltoft, there used to live a rich peasant, seemingly a paragon of propriety, a regular church-goer, a most attentive sermon-hearer, one who paid tithes of all he possessed; but somehow, nobody believed in him. And sure enough when he was dead and buried, his voice was often heard at night crying in woful accents, "Boundary here, boundary there!" The people knew the reason why.

Instead of those dark and sombre pine-forests so thoroughly in keeping with the grim, Dantesque grandeur of the Norwegian landscape, or the ghost-like white stems of the birch-trees, the only trees

visible are the glossy-foliaged, wide-spreading groves of beech, with now and then an oak.

I descend at Ringstedt to see the tombs of the great Valdemar (King of Denmark), and his two wives, Dagmar of Bohemia, and Berengaria of Portugal. The train, I perceive, is partly freighted with food for the capital, in the shape of sacks full of chickens (only fancy chickens in sacks!) and numbers of live pigs, which a man was watering with a watering-can, as if they had been roses, and would wither with the heat.

Having a vivid recollection of Ingermann's best historical tale, *Valdemar Seier*, it was with no little interest that I entered the church, and stood beside the flag-stones in the choir which marked the place of the King's sepulture. On the Regal tomb was incised, "Valdemarus Secundus Legislator Danorum." On either side were stones, with the inscriptions, "Regina Dagmar, prima uxor Valdemari Secundi," and "Regina Berengaria, secunda uxor Valdemari Secundi." The real name of Valdemar's first wife was Margaret, but she is only known to the Dane as little Dagmar, which means "dawning," or "morn-

ing-red." Her memory is as dear to the people as that of Queen Tyra Dannebod. She was as good as she was beautiful. The name of "Proud Bengard," on the contrary, is loaded with curses, as one who brought ruin upon the throne and country.

At this moment a gentleman approached me with a courteous bow; he was dressed in ribbed grey and black pantaloons, and a low-crowned hat. I found afterwards that he was a native of Bornholm, and no less a personage than the Probst of Ringstedt; he was very polite and affable, and informed me that these graves were opened not long ago in the presence of his present Majesty of Denmark. Valdemar was three ells long; his countenance was imperfect. Bengard's face and teeth were in good preservation. Dagmar's body had apparently been disturbed before.

In the aisle near, he pointed out the monument to Eric Plugpenning, the son of Valdemar. He had the nickname of Plugpenning (Plough-penny), for setting a tax on the plough. He was murdered on a fishing excursion by his brother. The fratricide's name was not Cain but Abel. There was no

luck afterwards about the house; the curse of Atreus and Thyestes rested upon it. Of course, after such an atrocity King Abel "walks," or more strictly speaking he "rides." Slain in a morass near the Eyder in 1252, his body was buried in the cathedral of Sleswig. But his spirit found no rest; by night he haunted the church and disturbed the slumbers of the canons; his corpse was consequently exhumed, and buried in a bog near Gottorp, with a stake right through it to keep it down; the peasants will still point out the place. But it was all to no purpose; a huntsman's horn is often heard at night in the vicinity, and Abel, dark of aspect, is seen scouring away on a small black horse, with a leash of dogs, burning like fire.

Here, then, in Denmark, we see the grand Asgaardsreia of Norway localized, and transferred from the nameless powers of the invisible world to malefactors of earth; while in Germany it assumes the shape of "The Wild Huntsman."

Returning to the inn, I amused myself till the next train arrived by looking at the Copenhagen paper, from which I learn that twenty pairs were

copulerede—married—last week, and that there has been a great meeting of Mormons in the capital. Such has been the effect of the mission of the elders in Jutland, that that portion of Denmark is becoming quite depopulated from emigration to the city of the Salt Lake. There is also a list of gold, silver, and bronze articles lately discovered in the country, and sent to the museum of Copenhagen, with the amount of payments received by each. In the precious metals these are according to weight. One lucky finder gets 72 rix dollars.

By the next train I advance to Roeskilde, which takes its name from the clear perennial spring of St. Roe, which ejects many gallons a minute. Baths and public rooms are established in connexion with it. But it was the Cathedral that drew me to Roeskilde. A brick building, in the plain Gothic of Denmark, it has not much interest in an architectural point of view; but there are monuments here which I felt bound to see. Old Saxo Grammaticus, the chronicler of early Denmark, the interior of whose study is so graphically described by Ingermann in the beginning of *Valdemar Seier*—he rests under that humble stone. Here, too, is buried in one of

the pillars of the choir, Svend Tveskjaeg, the father of Canute the Great, who died at the assize at Gainsborough, in 1014.

Queen Margaret (the Northern Semiramis), who wore the triple crown of Denmark, Sweden, and Norway, sleeps behind the altar, under a full-length monument in white marble more than four centuries old. It were well if the Scandinavian idea, now absorbing the minds of thinking men in the North, were to find a more happy realization than in her case—the union, instead of allaying the hostility with which each nation regarded the other, only serving to perpetuate embroilments. Some good kings and great repose here; also some wicked and mean. Among the former, it will suffice to mention Frederick IV., whom the Danes look upon as their greatest monarch. A bronze statue of him by Thorwaldsen is to be found in one of the chapels. In the latter category we unhesitatingly place Christian VII., to whom, in an evil hour, was married our Caroline Matilda, sister of George III., who died at the early age of twenty-three.

"And what do the Danes think now of Matilda?" inquired I of a person of intelligence.

"Oh, they say 'Stakkels Matilda!'" (unfortunate Matilda), was the touching but decisive reply. So that by the common voice of the people her memory is relieved from the stain cast upon it by those who were bound to protect her, the vile Queen-mother and the good-for-nothing King.

CHAPTER II.

Copenhagen—Children of Amak—Brisk bargaining—Specimens of horn fish—Unlucky dogs—Thorwaldsen's museum—The Royal Assistenz House—Going, gone—The Ethnographic Museum—An inexorable professor—Lionizes a big-wig—The stone period in Denmark—England's want of an ethnographical collection—A light struck from the flint in the stag's head—The gold period—A Scandinavian idol's cestus—How dead chieftains cheated fashion—Antiquities in gold—Wooden almanacks—Bridal crowns—Scandinavian antiquities peculiarly interesting to Englishmen—Four thousand a year in return for soft sawder—Street scenes in Copenhagen—Thorwaldsen's colossal statues—Blushes for Oxford and Cambridge—A Danish comedy—Where the warriors rest.

It was late in the evening when the third train of the day whisked us into Copenhagen, where I took up my abode at a quiet hotel near the ramparts.

What a strange place this is. Works of art, and museums superior to anything in Europe, and streets, for the most part very paltry, and infamously paved. Traveller, be on your guard. The

trottoirs of granite slab, worn slippery by the perambulating hobnails of those children of Amak, are very treacherous, and if you are supplanted, you will slide into a gutter nearly a foot deep, full of black sludge.

These people are a Dutch colony planted by King Christian II. in the neighbouring island of Amak.

The original female costume, which they still retain, consists of little black coalscuttle Quaker bonnets, very large dark-blue or white aprons, which almost hide their sober-coloured stuff gowns with their red and yellow edgings. Their ruddy faces, at the bottom of the said scuttles, look like hot cinders got there by mistake. Altogether they are a most neat, dapper, and cleanly-looking set of bodies. The men have also their peculiar costume. These people are the purveyors of vegetables for Copenhagen. Yon lady, standing in a little one-horse shay, full of flower-pots and bouquets, is another specimen of the clan, but seemingly one of the upper-crust section. Locomotive shops appear to be the fashion. Near the Church of our

Lady are a lot of butchers' carts drawn up, with meat for sale. They come from the environs of the city. Much life is concentred round the bridge near the palace. In the canal are several little stumpy sailing boats at anchor, crammed full of pots and crockery. These are from Bornholm and Jutland. Near them are some vessels with awnings: these are depôts of cheeses and butter from Sleswig and Holstein.

Look at yon row of women with that amphibious white head-dress spotted brown. In front it looks like a bonnet; behind, it terminates in a kerchief. You are reminded by the mixture of another mongrel, but picturesque article of dress, worn by the Welsh peasant-women, the pais a gwn bach. How they are gabbling to those ladies and housekeeper-looking women, and sparring linguistically about something in the basket. Greek contending with Trojan for the dead body of Achilles.

Their whole stock in trade consists of specimens of "hornfish," an animal like a sand eel, with long spiky snout, and of a silvery whiteness. They are about two feet long, and twenty skillings the pair. These women are from Helsingör, which is the

whereabouts of the said fish. They come from thence every day, if the wind serves; and if it does not, I fancy they manage to come all the same.

Look at these men, too, in the street, sawing and splitting away for dear life, a lot of beech logs at that door. Fuel, I find, is very dear, from seventeen to twenty dollars the fathom.

Alas! for the poor dogs, victims of that terrible fear of hydrophobia which seems to infect continental nations more than England; they are running about with capacious wire muzzles, projecting some inches beyond the smeller, which renders them, it is true, incapable of biting, but also of exchanging those amiable blandishments and courtesies with their kind, so becoming and so natural to them, and forming one of the great solaces of canine existence.

Yonder is Thorwaldsen's museum, with its yellow ochre walls, and frescoes outside representing the conveyance of his works from Italy hither. But that is shut up to-day, and besides, everybody has read an account of this museum of sculpture. An Englishman is surprised to learn that the sculptor's body rests, at his own request, under some ivy-

covered mould in the quad inside. But the ground, if not consecrated episcopally, is so by the atmosphere of genius around.

Let us just pop into this large building opposite. There is something to be seen here, perhaps, that will give us an insight into Copenhagen life.

"What is this place, sir?"

"This, sir, is the Royal Assistenz Huus."

"What may that be?"

"It is a place where needy people can have money lent on clothes. It enjoys a monopoly to the exclusion of all private establishments of the kind. If the goods are not redeemed within a twelvemonth, they are sold."

A sale of this kind, I found, was now going on. Seated at a table, placed upon a sort of dais, were two functionaries, dressed in brown-holland coats, who performed the part of auctioneers. One drawled out the several bids, and another booked the name and offer of the highest bidder, and very hot work it seemed to be; the one and the other kept mopping their foreheads, and presently a Jewish-looking youth, who had been performing the part of

jackal, handing up the articles of clothing, and exhibiting them to the buyers, brought the two brown-holland gents a foaming tankard of beer, which being swallowed, the scribe began scribbling, and the other Robins drawling again. A very nice pair of black trousers were now put up: "Better than new; show them round, Ignatius." A person of clerical appearance seized them, and examined them thoroughly; then a peasant woman got hold of them; she had very dark eyes and a very red pippin-coloured face. A broad scarlet riband, passing under her chin, fastened her lace-bordered cap, while on her crown was a piece of gold cloth. One would have thought that the way in which her countenance was swaddled would have impeded her utterance; but she led off the bidding, and was quickly followed by the motley crowd round the platform. But the clerical-looking customer who had been lying by, now took up the running, and had it easy. He marched off in triumph with his prize, and I feel no doubt that he would preach in them the next Sunday.

Leaving these daws to scramble for the plumes, I passed into another large room, where I saw some

nice-looking, respectable persons behind a large counter, examining different articles brought by unfortunates who were hard up. There was none of that mixture of cunning, hardness, and brutality about their demeanour which stamps the officials of the private establishments of the sort in England.

Hence we go to an old clothes establishment of another sort—I mean the Ethnographic Museum. Here you find yourself, as you proceed from chamber to chamber, now *tête-à-tête* with a Greenland family in their quaint abode; anon you are lower down Europe among the Laplanders, and among other little amusements you behold the get-up of a Lap wizard and his divining drum (quobdas). Hence you proceed eastward, and are now promenading with a Japanese beau in his handsome dress of black silk, now shuddering at the hideous grimaces of a Chinese deity. All this has been recently arranged with extraordinary care, and on scientific principles, by the learned Professor Thomsen.

"Herr Professor," exclaimed a bearded German, "can't we see the Museum of Northern Antiquities to-day? I have come all the way from Vienna to see it, and must leave this to-morrow."

"Unmöglich, mein Herr," replied the Professor. "To-morrow is the day. If you saw it to-day you would not see the flowers of the collection; and we will not show it without the flowers. The most costly and interesting specimens are locked up, and can't be opened unless all the attendants are present."

"Mais, Mons. Professeur," put in a French savan.

"C'est impossible," replied the Professor, shrugging up his shoulders.

"Could not we just have a little peep at it, sir?" here asked some of my fair countrywomen, in wheedling accents.

"I am very sorry, ladies, but this is not the day, you know. I shall be most happy to explain all to-morrow, at four o'clock," was the reply of the polyglot Professor.

It would be well if the curators of museums in England would have the example of Professor Thomsen before their eyes. There is no end to his civility to the public, and to his labours in the departments of science committed to his care. Speaking most of the European languages, he may

be seen, his Jove-like, grizzled head towering above the rest, listening to the questions of the curious crowd, and explaining to each in their own tongue in which they were born the meaning of the divers objects of art and science stored up in this palace. Next day, I found him engaged in lionizing a big-wig; at least, so I concluded, when I perceived that, on either breast, he wore a silver star of the bigness of a dahlia flower of the first magnitude; while his coat, studded with gold buttons, was further illustrated by a green velvet collar. Subsequently I learned, what I, indeed, guessed, that he was a Russian grandee on his travels. He is the owner of one of the best antiquarian collections in Europe. Professor Thomsen, not to be outdone, likewise exhibited four orders. While the Muscovite examined the various curiosities of the stone,* the bronze, and the iron period, I heard him talking with the air of a man whose mind was thoroughly

* According to Worsaae, the "stone" period in Denmark preceded the Celts, who possessed settled abodes in Europe 2000 years ago, by about a thousand years. The "bronze" period must have prevailed in the early part of the Christian era, when the Goths were inhabitants

made up about the three several migrations from the Caucasus of the Celts, Goths, and Sclavonians.

An Englishman, when he sees this wonderful collection, cannot but be struck with astonishment, on the one hand, at the industry and tact of Professor Thomsen, who has been the main instrument in its formation; and with shame and regret, on the other, that Great Britain has no collection of strictly national antiquities at all to be compared with it; and, what is more, it is daily being increased. The sub-curator, Mr. C. Steinhauer, informed me, that already, this year, he had received and added to the museum one hundred and twenty different batches of national antiquities, some believed to date as far back as before the Christian era. And then, the specimens are so admirably arranged, that you may really learn something from them as to the

of the country. The "iron" period can first be traced in Norway and Sweden with any certainty in the fourth and fifth centuries. In Denmark the use of iron superseded the use of bronze altogether about 700 A.D. But it is hardly necessary to observe, that there is still much controversy among antiquarians on this difficult subject.

state of civilization prevailing in Scandinavia at very remote periods: the collection being a connected running commentary or history, such as you will meet with nowhere else. Observe this oak coffin, pronounced to be not less than two thousand years old; and those pieces of woollen cloth of the same date. Look at that skeleton of a stag's head, discovered in the peat.

"There is nothing in that," says an Hibernian, fresh from Dublin. "Did you ever see the great fossil elk in Trinity College Museum?"

Ay! but there is something more interesting about this stag's head, nevertheless. Examine it closely. Imbedded in the bone of the jaw, see, there is a flint arrow-head; the bow that sped that arrow must have been pulled by a nervous arm. This "stag that from the hunter's aim had taken some hurt," perhaps retreated into a sequestered bog to languish, and sunk, by his weight, into the bituminous peat, and was thus embalmed by nature as a monument of a very early and rude period.

Presently we get among the gold ornaments.

There the Irishman is completely "shut up." "The Museum of Trinity College," and "Museum of the Royal Irish Academy," are beaten hollow. Nay, to leave no room for boasting, facsimiles of the gold head and neck ornaments in Dublin are actually placed here side by side with those discovered in Denmark. The weight of some of the armlets and necklets is astonishing. Here is a great gold ring, big enough for the waist; but it has no division, like the armlets, to enable the wearer to expand it, and fit it to the body; moreover, the inner side presents a sharp edge, such as would inconvenience a human wearer.

"That," said Professor Thomsen, seeing our difficulty, "must have been the waistband of an idol; which, as there was no necessity for taking it off, must have been soldered fast together, after it had once encircled the form of the image.*"

* There must have been an air of barbaric grandeur about these heathen temples. On the door of that at Lade, near Trondjem, was a massive gold ring. Olaf Trygveson, when wooing Sigrid the Haughty, made her a present of it. Having an eye to the main chance, she put it in the hands of the Swedish goldsmiths to be tested (Becky

"What can be the meaning of these pigmy ornaments and arms?" said I.

"Why, that is very curious. You know the ancient Scandinavian chieftain was buried with his sword and his trinkets. This was found to be expensive, but still the tyrant fashion was inflexible on the subject; so, to comply with her rules, and let the chief have his properties with him in the grave, miniature swords, &c., were made, and buried with him; just in the same way as some of your ladies of fashion, though they have killed their goose, will still keep it; in other words, though their diamonds are in the hands of the Jews, still love to glitter about in paste."

"Cunning people those old Vikings," thought I.

Sharp would not have done worse). They grinned knowingly. The weight was due in a great measure to a copper lining. No wonder after this that she flatly refused to be baptized, the condition Olaf had laid down for wedding her. Upon this he called her a heathen ———, and struck her on the cheek with his glove. "One day this shall be thy death," she exclaimed. She kept her word. Through her influence Sweyne was induced to war with Olaf, who lost his life in the memorable battle of the Baltic.

"Yes," continued our obliging informant, "and look at these," pointing to what looked like balls of gold. "They are weights gilt all over. The reason why they were gilt was the more easily to detect any loss of weight, which a dishonest merchant, had discovery not been certain, might otherwise have contrived to inflict on them." Those mighty wind-instruments, six feet long, are the war-horns (Luren) of the bronze period; under these coats of mail throbbed the bosoms of some valorous freebooters handed down to fame by Snorro. "Look here," continued he, "these pieces of thick gold and silver wire were used for money in the same way as later the links of a chain were used for that purpose. Here is a curious gold medal of Constantine, most likely used as a military decoration. The reverse has no impress on it." This reminded me of the buttons and other ornaments in Thelemarken, which are exact copies of fashions in use hundreds of years ago. Here again are some Bezants, coins minted at Byzantium, which were either brought over by the ships of the Vikings, or were carried up the Volga to

Novgorod, a place founded by the Northmen, and so on to Scandinavia, by the merchants and mercenary soldiers who in early times flocked to the East. Gotland used to be a gathering-place for those who thus passed to and fro, and to this Wisby owes its former greatness. Many of these articles of value were probably buried by the owner on setting out upon some fresh expedition from which he never returned, and their discovery has been due to the plough or the spade, while others have been unearthed from the barrows and cromlechs. Here, again, are some primstavs, or old Scandinavian wooden calendars. You see they are of two sorts—one straight, like the one I picked up in Thelemarken, while another is in the shape of an elongated ellipse. If you compare them, you will now find how much they differed, not only in shape, but also in the signs made to betoken the different days in the calendar. "You have heard of our Queen Dagmar." Here is a beautiful enamelled cross of Byzantine workmanship which she once wore around her neck. You have travelled in Norway? Wait a moment,"

continued the voluble Professor, as he directed an attendant to open a massive escritoir. "You are aware, sir, that it is the custom in Norway and Sweden for brides to wear a crown. I thought that, before the old custom died, I would secure a memento of it. I had very great difficulty, the peasants were so loth to part with them, but at last I succeeded, and behold the result, sir. That crown is from Iceland, that from Sweden, and that from Norway. It is three hundred years old. That fact I have on the best authority. It used to be lent out far and near for a fixed sum, and, computing the weddings it attended at one hundred per annum, which is very moderate, it must have encircled the heads of thirty thousand brides on their wedding-day. Very curious, Excellence!" he continued, giving the Russian grandee a sly poke in the ribs.

The idea seemed to amuse the old gentleman of the stars and green velvet collar wonderfully.

"Sapperlot! Potztannsend noch ein mal!" he ejaculated, with great animation, while the anti-

quarian dust seemed to roll from his eyes, and they gleamed up uncommonly.

In the same case I observed more than one hundred Danish, Swedish, and Norwegian spoons of quaint shape, though they were nearly all of what we call the Apostle type.

But we must take leave of the museum with the remark that, to see it thoroughly, would require a great many visits. To an Englishman, whose country was so long intimately connected with Scandinavia,—and which has most likely undergone pretty nearly the same vicissitudes of civilization and occupancy as Scandinavia itself—this collection must be intensely interesting, especially when examined by the light thrown upon it by Worsaae and others.

Indeed, if England wishes to know the facts of her Scandinavian period, it is to these people that she must look for information.

"Ten per cent. for my money!" That, alas! is too often an Englishman's motto now-a-days; "and I can't get that by troubling my head about King Olaf or Canute."

While I write this I am reminded of an agreeable, good-looking young Briton whom I met here; he is a physician making four thousand a-year by administering doses of soft sawder. Thrown by circumstances early on the world, he has not had the opportunity of acquiring ideas or knowledge out of the treadmill of his profession. He is just fresh from Norway, through which he has shot like a rocket, being pressed for time.

"How beautiful the rivers are there," he observed; "so rapid. By-the-bye, though, your river at Oxford must be something like them. The poet says, 'Isis rolling rapidly!'"

Leaving the museum, I dined at the great restaurant's of Copenhagen, Jomfru Henkel's, in the Ostergade; it was too crowded for comfort. Dinner is *à la carte*.

Some convicts were mending the roadway in one of the streets; their jackets were half black, half yellow, trousers ditto, only that where the jacket was black, the inexpressibles were yellow on the same side, and *vice versâ*. Their legs were heavily chained. Many carriages were assembled round

the church of the Holy Ghost; I found it was a wedding. All European nations, I believe, but the English, choose the afternoon for the ceremony.

Thorwaldsen's colossal statues in white marble of our Saviour and his Apostles which adorn the Frue Kirke, are too well known to need description.

At the Christianborg, or Palace of King Christian, the lions that caught my attention first were the three literal ones in massive silver, which always figure at the enthronization of the Danish monarchs. Next to them I observed the metaphorical lions, viz., the sword of Gustavus Adolphus, the cup in which Peter the Great used to take his matutinal dram, the portrait of the unhappy Matilda, and of the wretched Christian VII.

Blush Oxford and Cambridge, when you know that on the walls of this palace, side by side with the freedom of the City of London and the Goldsmiths' Company (but the London citizens are of course not very particular in these matters), hang your diplomas of D.C.L., engrossed on white satin, conferred upon this precious specimen of a husband and king.

That evening I went to see a comedy of Holberg's at the theatre, *Jacob von Tybö* by name. It seemed to create immense fun, which was not to be wondered at, for the piece contained a rap at the German customs, and braggadocio style of that people in vogue here some hundred years ago. The taste for that sort of thing, as may readily be imagined, no longer exists here. Roars of laughter accompanied every hit at Tuskland. The two Roskilds and Madame Pfister acquitted themselves well. The temperature of the building was as nearly as possible that of the Black Hole of Calcutta, as far as I was able to judge by my own feelings compared with the historical account of that delectable place. A lady next me told me that they had long talked of an improved building.

Next day I visited the Seamen's Burial Ground, where, clustering about an elevated mound, are the graves of the Danish sailors who fell in 1807. I observed an inscription in marble overgrown with ivy :—

Kranz som Fadrelandet gav,
Den visner ei paa falden Krieger's Grav.
The chaplet which their fatherland once gave
Shall never fade on fallen warrior's grave.

True to the motto, the monuments are decked every Saturday with fresh flowers. Fuchsias were also growing in great numbers about. The different spaces of ground are let for a hundred years; if the lease is not renewed then, I presume the Company will enter upon the premises. There were traces about, I observed, of English whittlers. Our countrymen seem to remember the command of the augur to Tarquinius, "cut boldly," and the King cut through.

CHAPTER III.

The celebrated Three Crowns Battery—Hamlet's grave—The Sound and its dues—To Fredericksborg—Iceland ponies—Denmark an equine paradise—From Copenhagen to Kiel—Tidemann, the Norwegian painter—Pictures at Düsseldorf—The boiling of the porridge—Düsseldorf theatricals—Memorial of Dutch courage—Young heroes—An attempt to describe the Dutch language—The Amsterdam canals—Half-and-half in Holland—Want of elbow-room—A New Jerusalem—A sketch for Juvenal—The museum of Dutch paintings—Magna Charta of Dutch independence—Jan Steen's picture of the *fête* of Saint Nicholas—Dutch art in the 17th century—To Zaandam—Traces of Peter the Great—Easy travelling—What the reeds seemed to whisper.

THE name of the steamer which took me past the celebrated Three Crowns Battery, and along to the pretty low shores of Zealand to Elsineur (Helsingör), was the *Ophelia*, fare three marks. In the Marielyst Gardens, which overhang the famed Castle of Kronborg, is a Mordan's-pencil-case-shaped pillar of dirty granite, miscalled

"Hamlet's grave." Yankees often resort here, and pluck leaves from the lime-trees overhanging the mausoleum, for the purpose of conveyance to their own country.

But this is not the only point of interest for Brother Jonathan. Look at the Sound yonder, refulgent in the light of the evening sun, with the numberless vessels brought up for the night, having been warned by the bristling cannon to stop, and pay toll. I don't wonder that those scheming, go-a-head people, object to the institution altogether—albeit the proceeds are a vital question for Denmark. On the steamer, I fell into conversation with a Danish pilot about this matter. I found that he, like others of his countrymen, was very slow to acknowledge that ships are forced to stop opposite the castle. He said that only ships bound to Russia do so, because the Czar insists on their having their papers *viséd* by the Danish authorities before they are permitted to enter his ports.*

Finding there was no public conveyance to

* These tolls, as is well known, have since been redeemed.

Fredericksborg, which I purposed visiting, I must fain hire a one-horse vehicle at the Post. It was a sort of mail phaeton, of the most cumbrous and unwieldy description—I don't know how much dearer than in Norway—so slow, too. On the road we pass the romantic lake of Gurre, the scene of King Valdemar's nightly hunt. Some storks remind the traveller of Holland. Right glad I was when we at length jogged over divers drawbridges spanning very green moats, and through sundry gates, and emerged upon a large square, facing the main entrance to the castle.

The private apartments, I found, were, by a recent regulation, invisible; as his Majesty has taken to living a good deal here. But I was shown the chapel, in which all the monarchs of Denmark are crowned, gorgeous with silver, ebony, and ivory; and the Riddersaal over it, one hundred and sixty feet long, with its elaborate ceiling, and many portraits: and, marvellous to relate, the custodian would have nothing for his trouble but thanks. In the stable were several little Iceland ponies, which looked like a cross between the Norsk and Shetland races. They were fat and

sleek, and, no doubt, have an easy time of it; indeed, Denmark is a sort of equine paradise. What well-to-do fellows those four strapping brown horses were that somnambulized with the diligence that conveyed us to Copenhagen. That their slumbrous equanimity might not be disturbed, the very traces were padded, and, instead of collars, they wore broad soft chest-straps. The driver told me they cost three hundred and fifty dollars each. That flat road, passing through numerous beech-woods was four and a-half Danish miles long, equal to twenty English, and took us more than four hours to accomplish.

Bidding adieu to Copenhagen, I returned by rail to Korsör, and embarked in the night-boat *Skirner*, from thence to Kiel. As the name of the vessel, like almost every one in Scandinavia, is drawn from the old Northern mythology, I shall borrow from the same source for an emblem of the stifling state of the atmosphere in the cabin. "A regular Muspelheim!" said I to a Dane, as I pantingly look round before turning in, and saw every vent closed. A fog retarded our progress, and

it was not till late the next afternoon that I found myself in Hamburg. Some few hours later I was under the roof of mine host of the "Three Crowns," at Düsseldorf, where I purposed paying a visit to Tidemann, the Norwegian painter. Unfortunately, he was not returned from his summer travels, so that I could not deliver to him the greeting I had brought him from his friends in the Far North. His most recent work, which I had heard much of, the "Wounded Bear-hunter returning Home, having bagged his prey," was also away, having been purchased by the King of Sweden. At the Institute, however, I saw several sketches and paintings by this master.

Anna Gulsvig is evidently the original of the "Grandmother telling Stories."

Bagge's "Landscape in Valders," and Nordenberg's "Dalecarlian Scenes," brought back for a moment the land I had quitted to my mind and vision. "The Mother teaching her Children," and "The Boiling of the Porridge," also by Tidemann, proclaim him to be the Teniers of Norway. Though while he catches the national traits, he manages to

represent them without vulgarity. But perhaps this lies in the nature of the thing. The heavy-built Dutchman anchored on his square flat island of mud can't possibly have any of that rugged elevation of mind, or romance of sentiment, that would belong to the child of the mountain and lake.

The school of Düsseldorf—if such it can be called—has turned out some great artists, *e.g.*, Kaulbach and Cornelius; but the place has never been itself since it lost its magnificent collection of pictures, which now grace the Pinacothek at Munich.

As I sipped a cup of coffee in the evening, I read a most grandiloquent account of the prospects of the Düsseldorf Theatre for the ensuing winter. The first lover was perfection, while the tragedy queen was "unübertrefflich" (not to be surpassed). The part of tender mother and matron was also about to be taken by a lady of no mean theatrical pretensions. This self-complacency of the inhabitants of the smaller cities is quite delightful.

On board the steamer to Emmerich was a family of French Jews, busily engaged, not in looking about them, but in calculating their expenses, though dressed in the pink of fashion.

Here I am at Amsterdam. In the Grand Place is a monument in memory of Dutch bravery and obstinacy evinced in the fight with Belgium. This has only just been erected with great fêtes and rejoicings. Well, to be sure! this reminds me of the Munich obelisk, in memory of those luckless thirty thousand Bavarians who swelled Napoleon's expedition to Russia, and died in the cause of his insatiable ambition. "Auch sie starben für das Vaterland" is the motto.

V. Ruyter and V. Speke are both monumented in the adjoining church. The former, who died at Syracuse from a wound, is described in the inscription as "Immensi tremor Oceani," and owing all to God, "et virtuti suæ."

The warlike spirit of Young Amsterdam seems to be effectually excited just now. As I passed through the Exchange at a quarter to five P.M., the merchants were gone, and in their room was an obstre-

perous crowd of *gamins*, armed "with sword and pistol," like Billy Taylor's true love (only they were sham), and thumping their drums, and the drums thumping the roof, and the roof and the drum together reverberating against the drum of my ear till I was fairly stunned. "Where are the police?" thought I, escaping from the hubbub with feelings akin to what must have been those of Hogarth's enraged musician, or of a modern London householder, fond of quiet, with the Italian organ-grinders rending the air of his street. Dutch is German in the Somersetshire dialect; so I managed to comprehend, without much difficulty, the short instructions of the passers-by as to my route to various objects of interest. By-the-bye, here is the house of Admiral de Ruyter, next to the Norwegian Consulate. Over the door I see there is his bust in stone.

As I pass along the canals, it puzzles me to think how the Dutchman can live by, nay, revel in the proximity of these seething tanks of beastliness and corruption. That notion about the pernicious effects of inhaling sewage effluvia must be a myth, after all, and the sanitary commission a

regular job. Indeed, I always thought so, after a conversation I once had with a fellow in London, the very picture of rude health, who told me he got his living by mudlarking and catching rats in the sewers, for which there was always a brisk demand at Oxford and Cambridge, in term time. Look at these jolly Amsterdamers. I verily believe it would be the death of them if you separated them from their stinking canals, or transported them to some airy situation, with a turbulent river hurrying past. Custom is second nature, and that has doubtless much to do with it: but the nature of the liquids poured down the inner man perhaps fortifies Mynheer against the evil effects of the semi-solid liquid of the canals. Just after breakfast I went into the shop of the celebrated Wijnand Fockink, the Justerini and Brooks of Amsterdam, to purchase a case of liqueurs, when I heard a squabby-shaped Dutchman ask for a glass of half-and-half. It is astonishing, I thought with myself, how English tastes and habits are gaining ground everywhere. Of course he means porter and ale mixed. The attendant supplied him with the article he wanted, and it was bolted at a gulp.

Dutch half-and-half, reader, is a dram of raw gin and curaçoa, in equal portions.

What a crowd of people, to be sure. "Holland is over-peopled," said a tradesman to me. "Why, sir, you can have a good clerk for 20*l.* per annum. The land is ready to stifle with the close packing."

"Yes," said I, "so it appears. That operation going on under the bridge is a fit emblem of the tightness of your population."

As I spoke, I pointed to a man, or rather several men, engaged in a national occupation: packing herrings in barrels. How closely they were fitted, rammed and crammed, and then a top was put on the receptacle, and so on, *ad infinitum*.

We are now in the Jewish quarter. "Our people," as the Israelites are wont to call themselves, formerly looked on Amsterdam as a kind of New Jerusalem. Indeed, they are a very important and numerous part of the population. The usual amount of dirt and finery, young lustrous eyes, and old dingy clothes, black beards and red beards, small infants and big hook noses, are jumbled about the shop-doors and in the crowded

thoroughfares. Here are some fair peasant girls, Frieslanders, I should think, or from beyond the Y, judging by their helmet-shaped head-dresses of gold and silver plates, with the little fringe of lace drawn across the forehead, just over the eyebrows, the very same that Gerard Dow and Teniers have placed before us. If they were not Dutch women, and belonged to a very wide-awake race, I should tremble for them, as they go staring and sauntering about in rustic simplicity, for fear of that lynx-eyed Fagan with the Satyr nose and leering eye fastened upon them, who is clearly just the man to help to despoil them of their gold and silver, or something more precious still, in the way of his trade.

As we walk through the streets, the chimes, that ever and anon ring out from the old belfries, remind us that we are in the Low Countries; and if that were not sufficient, the showers of water on this bright sunny day descending from the house-sides, after being syringed against them by some industrious abigail, make the fact disagreeably apparent to the passer-by. This will prepare me for my visit to Broek; not that there is so much

to be seen there—and Albert Smith has brought the place bodily before us—but if one left it out, all one's friends that had been there would aver, with the greatest possible emphasis and solemnity, that I had omitted seeing *the* wonder of Holland. So I shall *do* it, if all be well.

Here is the Trippenhuus, or Museum of Dutch paintings, situated, of course, on a canal. Van der Helst's picture of the "Burgher Guard met to celebrate the Treaty of Münster"—the Magna Charta of Dutch independence, pronounced by Sir Joshua to be the finest of its kind in the world—of course claims my first attention. The three fingers held up, emblematic of the Trinity, is the continental equivalent to the English taking Testament in hand upon swearing an oath. But as everybody that has visited Amsterdam knows all about this picture, and those two of Rembrandt's, the "Night-watch," and that other of the "Guild of Cloth Merchants," this mention of them will suffice.

That picture is Jan Steen's "Fête of St. Nicholas," a national festival in Holland. The saint is supposed to come down the chimney, and shower

bonbons on the good children, while he does not forget to bring a rod for the naughty child's back.

De Ruyter is also here, with his flashing eye, contracted brow, and dark hair. While, of course, the collection is not devoid of some of Vandervelde's pictures of Holland's naval victories when Holland was a great nation.

There must have been great genius and great wealth in this country wherewith to reward it, in the seventeenth century. In this very town were born Van Dyk, Van Huysum, and Du Jardin; in Leyden, G. Douw, Metzu, W. Mieris, Rembrandt, and J. Steen. Utrecht had its Bol and Hondekoeter; while Haarlem, which was never more than a provincial town with 48,000 inhabitants, produced a Berghem, a Hugtenberg, a Ruysdael, a Van der Helst, and a Wouvermans.

In proof of the *sharpness* of the Amsterdamers, I may mention that most of the diamonds of Europe are cut here.

Next day, I took the steamer to Zaandam, metamorphosed by us into Saardam, pretty much on the

same principle, I suppose, that an English beef-steak becomes in the mouths of the French a "biftek." The tumble-down board-house, with red tile roof, built by the semi-savage Peter, in 1632, will last all the longer for having been put in a brick-case by one of the imperial Russian family. I always look on Peter's shipwright adventures, under the name of Master Baas, as a great exaggeration. He perhaps wanted to make his subjects take up the art, but he never had any serious thoughts of carpentering himself. He only was here three days, and, as the veracious old lady who showed the place told me, he built this house himself, so what time had he for the dockyards? When some of your great folks go to the Foundling Hospital, and eat the plum-pudding on Christmas-day, or visit Woolwich and taste the dietary, and seem to like it very much, that is just such another make-believe.

"Nothing is too little for a great man," was the inscription on the marble slab over the chimney-piece, placed there by the very hand of Alexander I. of Russia. In the room are two cupboards, in one of which Peter kept his victuals, while the other

was his dormitory. If Peter slept in that cupboard, and if he shut the door of it, all I have to say is, the ventilation must have been very deficient, and how he ever survived it is a wonder. The whole hut is comprised in two rooms. In the other room are two pictures of the Czar. In the one, presented in '56 by Prince Demidoff, the Czar, while at work, axe in hand, is supposed to have received unwelcome intelligence from Muscovy, and is dictating a dispatch to his secretary. The finely chiselled features, pale complexion, and air of refinement, here fathered on this ruffian, never belonged to him. The other picture, presented by the munificent and patriotic M. Van der Hoof, is infinitely more to the purpose, and shows you the man as he really was, and in short, as he appears in a contemporary portrait at the Rosenborg Slot. Thick, sensual lips—the very lips to give an unchaste kiss, or suck up strong waters—contracted brow, bushy eyebrows, coarse, dark hair and moustache—that is the real man. He wears broad loose breeches reaching to the knee, and on the table is a glass of grog to refresh him at his work.

Ten minutes sufficed for me to take the whole thing in, and to get back in time for the returning steamer, otherwise I should have been stranded on this mud island for some hours, and there is nought else to see but a picture in the church of the terrible inundation; the ship-building days of Zaandam having long since gone by, and passed to other places.

By this economy of time I shall be enabled to take the afternoon treckshuit to Broek. A ferry-boat carries us over the Y from Amsterdam, a distance of two or three hundred yards, to Buiksloot, the starting-place of the treckshuit, when, to my surprise, each passenger gives an extra gratuity to the boatman. This shows to what lengths the fee-system may go. And yet Englishmen persist in introducing it into Norway, where hitherto it has been unknown. Entering into the little den called cabin, I settled down and looked around me. On the table were the Lares, to wit, a brass candlestick, beyond it a brass stand about a foot high, with a pair of snuffers on it, and then two brasiers containing charcoal, the whole shining wonderfully bright. Opposite me, sitting on the puffy cushions,

was a substantial-looking peasant, immensely stout and broad sterned, dressed in a dark jacket and very wide velveteen trousers. He wore a large gold seal, about the size and shape of a half-pound packet of moist sugar, and a double gold brooch, connected by a chain. As the boat seemed a long time in starting, I emerged again from this odd little shop to ascertain the cause of the delay, when I found to my surprise that we were already under way. So noiselessly was the operation effected, that I was not aware of it. Dragged by a horse, on which sat a sleepy lad, singing a sleepy song, the boat glided mutely along. The only sound beside the drone of the boy was the rustling of the reeds, which seemed to whisper, "What an ass you are for coming along this route. You, who have just come from the land of the mountain and the flood, to paddle about among these frogs." Really, the whole affair is desperately slow, and there is nothing in the world to see but numerous windmills, with their thatched roof and sides, whose labour it is to drain the large green meadows lying some feet below us, on which numerous herds of cows are feeding.

CHAPTER IV.

Broek—A Dutchman's idea of Paradise—A toy-house for real people—Cannon-ball cheeses—An artist's flirtation—John Bull abroad—All the fun of the fair—A popular refreshment—Morals in Amsterdam—The Zoological Gardens—Bed and Breakfast—Paul Potter's bull—Rotterdam.

I WAS not sorry when the captain, who of course received a fee for himself besides the fare, called out "Broek!" The stagnation of water, and sound, and life in general, on a Dutch canal, is positively oppressive to the feelings; it would have been quite a relief to have had a little shindy among the passengers and the crew, such as gave a variety to the canal voyage of Horace to Brundusium.

To enliven matters, supposing we tell you a tale about Broek, which I of course ferreted out of a drowsy Dutch chronicle, but which the ill-natured Smelfungus says has been already told by Washington Irvine. In former times, the people of the place were sadly negligent of their spiritual duties, and turned a very deaf ear

to the exhortations of the clergyman. A new parson at last arrived, who beholding all the people given to idolatry in the shape of washing, washing, washing all the day long, and apparently thinking of nothing else, hit upon a new scheme for reforming them. He bid them be righteous and fear God, and then they should get to Paradise, and he described what joys should be theirs in that abode of bliss. This was the old tale, and the congregation were on the point of subsiding into their usual sleep.

"The abode of bliss," continued the preacher, "and cleanliness, and everlasting washing." The Dutchmen opened their eyes. "Yes," proceeded the preacher; "the joys of earth shall to the good be continued in heaven. You will be occupied in washing, and scrubbing, and cleaning, and in cleaning, and washing, and scrubbing, for ever and ever, amen."

He had hit the right chord; the parson became popular, the church filled, and a great reformation was wrought in Broek.

Sauntering along the Grand Canal, from which, as from a backbone, ribbed out divers lesser canals,

I entered, at the bidding of an old lady, one of the houses of the place, with the date of 1612 over it. Of course its floor was swept and garnished, and the little pan of lighted turf was burning in the fireplace; and there was the usual amount of china vases, and knickknacks of all descriptions scattered about to make up a show. And then she showed me the bed like a berth, which smelt very fusty, and the door, which is never opened except at a burial or bridal. After this, I walked into a little warehouse adjoining, all painted and prim, and saw eight thousand cannon-ball-shaped cheeses in a row, value one dollar a piece, each with a red skin, like a very young infant's. This colour is obtained, I understand, by immersing them in a decoction of Bordeaux grape husks, which are imported from France for the purpose. I next went to the bridge over the canal, and tried to sketch the avenue of dwarf-like trees and the row of toy-houses, and the old man brushing away two or three leaves that had fallen on the sward. At this moment came by a buxom girl in the genuine costume of the place, who exclaimed, "Lauk, he's

sketching!" (in Dutch) and stood immovable before me, and so of course I proceeded incontinently to sketch her in the foreground, she keeping quite still, and then coming and peeping over my shoulder, to see how she looked on paper.

Finding it was late, I hurried back to catch the return boat, faster, I should think, than anybody ever ventured before to go in Broek; at least, I judged so from the looks of sleepy astonishment and almost displeasure which seemed to gather on the Lotos-eater-like countenances of the citizens I met. As it was, I just saved the boat, and am now again gliding smoothly back to Amsterdam.

As I look through the windows of the cabin, I perceive a few golden plover and stints basking listlessly among the reeds, undisturbed by our transit. This time, however, there was more bustle on board. There were two foreigners who were very full of talk, and who, though they were speaking to a Dutchman in French, I knew at once to be English. As I finished up my sketch, I heard one of these gentlemen say, "Ah! I am an

Englishman ; you would not have thought it, but so it is. Few English speak French with a correct accent, but I, maw (moi ?); jabbeta scese ann ong France, solemong pour parlay lar lang, ay maw jay parl parfaitmong biong." I differed from him. It has seldom been my lot to hear French spoken worse. John Bull abroad is certainly a curiosity.

That evening I sallied out to see the Kirmess, or great annual fair. Its chief scene was round the statue of Rembrandt, in the heart of the city. Hogarth's "Southwark Fair" would give but a faint idea of the state of things. There was the usual amount of wild beasts and giants ; there was a pumpkin of a woman and her own brother, as thin as if he were training to get up the inside of a gas-pipe, to be seen inside one show, and their faithful portraits outside on a canvas, painted after the school of Sir Peter Paul Rubens. A mechanical theatre from Bamberg was apparently doing an immense trade under the auspices of an unmistakable Jewish family, who appeared from time to time on the platform. Close by was a picture of Sebas-

topol, which professed to have arrived from London. But the undiscerning public seemed to care very little about it; it was in vain that they were summoned to advance to the ticket-office by the sound of fife and drum—one could almost imagine, that the person of rueful and despairing aspect who was waiting for the people to ascend the parapet, had been spending some weeks in the trenches before the devoted city. The crowds, that surged about in serried masses, had their wants well seen to in the refreshment way. One favourite esculent was brown smoked eels, weighing perhaps half a pound each, and placed in large heaps on neat-looking stalls, kept by neat-looking people. The eels were stretched out full length as stiff as pokers, and I saw several respectable looking sight-seers solacing themselves with a fish of the sort.

But the most popular refreshment remains to be mentioned. Ranged along the street, in a compact row, were a number of gaudily painted temples; in front of each sat the priestess. Mostly, she was young and pretty, but here and there, blowsy and obese. By her side was a large

bright copper caldron, steaming with a white hasty-pudding-looking substance. In front of her was a fire, over which was a broad square plate of iron, studded with small holes like a bagatelle-board. The female held in her hand a wand, or rather a long iron spoon, which she dabbed into the caldron, and then delivered a portion of the contents into the little holes above-mentioned. This required great adroitness; but custom appeared to have brought her to the pinnacle of her art, and she hardly ever missed her mark. In a second or two, the hasty-pudding became transformed into a sort of small pancake, and was whipped out of its *locus in quo* by a light-fingered acolyte of the male sex. I observed that behind the priestess were sundry little alcoves, shaded by bright-coloured curtains; in these might be seen loving pairs, feasting on the handiworks of the lady of the spoon. The repast was simple, and was soon dispatched, for a constant succession of votaries kept entering and issuing from the alcoves. If I was correctly informed, it would have been possible to have got as high as the top button

of your waistcoat for the small sum of a few stivers.

I was sorry to hear that this national festival—a sort of Dutch carnival, which is visited by all classes—is ruinous to what is left of morals in Amsterdam.

Before leaving the city, I must not omit to mention the Zoological Gardens. If you wish to find them, you must ask for the "Artis;" that is the name it is known by to every gamin and fisherman in Amsterdam. The Dutch are very classical, and the inscription over the entrance is, "Naturæ artis magistra." Half-a-dozen other public places go by Latin names. Thus, the Royal Institution of Literature and Art is called "Felix Meritis," from the first words of a legend on the front of the building.

Next day, I take leave of my room in the hotel, with its odd French-shaped beds, closed in by heavy green stuff curtains, and great projecting chimney-piece. In my bill, the charge for bed tacitly includes that for breakfast; these two items being, seemingly, considered by the Dutch all one

thing. Cheese appears to be invariably eaten by the natives with their morning coffee, which is kept hot by a little spirit-lamp under the coffee-pot.

After this, I stopped at Shravenhagen (the Hague), to see Paul Potter's Bull. On the Sunday, attended a Calvinistic place of worship, where I was horrified to behold the irreverent way in which the male part of the congregation, who looked not unlike your unpleasant political dissenter at a church-rate meeting, gossiped with their hats on their heads until the entrance of the clergyman.

Next day, I found myself at Rotterdam. The steamer for London managed, near Helvoetsluys, to break the floats of her paddle-wheel; the engine could not be worked; and as there was a heavy sea and strong wind blowing on-shore, we should soon have been there, had not another steamer come to our assistance, and towed us back into a place of safety. After repairing damages, we proceeded on our voyage, and eventually arrived unharmed in London.

CHAPTER V.

Oxford in the Long Vacation—The rats make such a strife—A case for Lesbia—Interview between a hermit and a novice—The ruling passion—Blighted hopes—Norwegian windows—Tortoise-shell soup—After dinner—Christianiansand again—Ferry on the Torrisdal river—Plain records of English travellers—Salmonia—The bridal crown—A bridal procession—Hymen, O Hymenæe!—A ripe Ogress—The head cook at a Norwegian marriage—God-fearing people—To Sætersdal—Neck or nothing—Lilies and lilies—The Dutch myrtle.

I WAS sitting in my rooms, about the end of the month of July, 1857, having been dragged perforce, by various necessary avocations, into the solitude of the Oxford Long Vacation; not a soul in this college, or, in short, in any college. "A decided case of 'Last Rose of Summer,'" mused I. "Those rats or mice, too, in the cupboard, what a clattering and squeaking they keep up, lamenting, probably, the death of one of their companions in the trap this morning; but, nevertheless, they are not a bit intimi-

dated, for it is hunger that makes them valiant." The proverb, "Hungry as a church mouse," fits a college mouse in Long Vacation exactly. The supplies are entirely stopped with the departure of the men: no remnants of cold chicken, or bread-and-butter, no candles. It is not surprising, then, they have all found me out.

I positively go to bed in fear and trembling, lest they should make a nocturnal attack.

> Each hole and cranny they explore,
> Each crook and corner of the chamber;
> They hurry-skurry round the floor,
> And o'er the books and sermons clamber.

The fate of that worthy Bishop Hatto stares me in the face. If they did not spare so exalted a personage, what will become of me? And as for keeping a cat, no, that may not be. I am not a Whittington. They are a treacherous race, and purr, and fawn, and play the villain — quadrupedal Nena Sahibs. I always hated them, and still more so since an incident I witnessed one year in Norway.

On the newly-mown grass before the cottage where I was staying, a lot of little redpoles—the

sparrows of those high latitudes—were very busily engaged picking up their honest livelihood, and making cheerful remarks to one another on the brightness of the weather and the flavour of the hay-seeds. Intently examining their motions through my glass, I had paid no heed to a cat which seemed rolling about carelessly on the lawn. Suddenly, I perceived that it had imperceptibly edged nearer and nearer to the pretty little birds, and was gliding, snake-like, towards them. I tapped at the window lustily, and screamed out in hopes of alarming my friends; but it was too late; they flew up, the cat sprung up aloft likewise, caught a poor little fellow in mid-air, and was away with it and out of sight in a moment.

> At vobis male sit, *catis dolorum*
> *Plenis*, qui omnia bella devoratis!
> Tam bellum mihi passerem abstulistis!
> O factum malé! o miselle passer!

Norway! and why am I not there? It is too late this year to think of it. I must write to that friend, and say I can't keep my promise, and join him thither. No, I must be content with a little trout-

fishing in Wales or Scotland. At this moment a tap is heard at the door. An ingenuous youth, undergraduate of St. Sapientia College, and resident in the neighbourhood, had brought a letter of introduction from a common friend, begging me, as one deep in the mysteries of Norwegian travelling, to give the bearer some information respecting that country, as he thought of taking a month's trip thither.

As I pulled out Munck's map, chalked out a route for the youth, and gave him a little practical advice on the subject, a regular spasm came across me. Iö was never plagued by that malicious gadfly, or "tsetse," so much as I was for the rest of the day by an irresistible desire to be off to the old country. The steamer was to start in three days. On the third day I stood on board of her, in the highest possible spirits. The ingenuous youth was also there; but high hope was not the expression on his countenance. Most wofully he approached me. To make assurance doubly sure, and secure a good berth, he had left home the day before. On arriving at the terminus, his box was not to be found—the box with all his traps, and the 50*l.*

in it. He had sent telegrams, or telegraphemes, to the four ends of Great Britain for the missing box; but it was not forthcoming. In a few hours we weighed anchor. The expectant visitor was left behind, and as there was no vessel to Norway for the next fortnight, the chances were that his trip thither would not take place. The above facts will serve as a warning to young travellers.

As daylight peered through the small porthole in the morning, I found that we had no less than eight people in our cabin, and that the porthole was shut, although it was smooth water.

"What an atmosphere," said an Englishman, in an adjoining berth. "I have opened that porthole two or three times in the night; but that fat, drum-bellied Norwegian there, who seems as fond of hot, stifling air as a melon, has shut it again."

"What can you expect of the people of a country," replied I, "where the windows are often not made to open?"

A tall, gentlemanly-looking man, who stood before the looking-glass, and had just brushed his

glossy wig into a peak like Mr. Pecksniff, here turned round and said, in Norwegian-English—

"I do assure you, sir, that the Norwegian windows will open."

"Yes, in the towns; but frequently in the country not. I have been there a good deal, and I speak from experience."

I find that our friend, who is very communicative, was in London in the days of the Prince Regent—yes, and he once dined with him at the London Tavern, at a dinner given in aid of foreigners in distress: the ticket cost 10*l*. He remembers perfectly well how, on another occasion, a *tortoise-shell*, all alive, was carried round London in a cart, with a notice that it would be made into tortoise-shell soup on a certain day. He dined, and the soup was super-excellent.

Consul ——, for I found that he had attained that distinction—was well acquainted with all the resorts of London. Worxall pleased him much. He had even learned to box. He had also something to say about the war with the Swedes, led on by Karl Johann, in which he took part.

After dinner we divert ourselves by observing

the sleeping countenance of the obese Norwegian who was so fond of carbonic acid gas, assume all sorts of colours,—livid, red, yellow,—not from repletion, though this might well have been the case, but from the light of the painted glass overhead, which transferred its chameleon hues to his physiognomy.

Here I am, once more plunging into the heart of Norway in the national vehicle, the carriole; up hills, down hills, across stony morasses, through sandy pine forests. We landed this afternoon at Christiansand, and I am now seven miles north of it, and standing by the side of the magnificent Torrisdal river, waiting for the great unwieldy ferry-boat to come over. The stream is strong and broad, and there is only one man working the craft; but, by taking advantage of a back stream on the other side, and one on this, he has actually accomplished the passage with little trouble, and hit the landing-place to an inch.

On the other side, three or four carrioles, some of them double ones, are just descending the steep hill, and I have to wait till they get down to the water-side, in consequence of the narrowness of

the road. One of the strangers, with a broad gold band round his cap, turns out to be the British consul. He is returning with a party of ladies and gentlemen from a pic-nic at the Vigelandsfoss, about three miles from this, where the river makes a fine fall.

That evening we stop at the Verwalter's (Bailiff's), close by the falls. I have no salmon-rod, but Mr. C——, an Englishman, who has come up with me to sketch the foss, and try for a salmon, obtains leave, as a great favour, to fish in the pools for one dollar a day, and a dollar to each of the boatmen. The solitary grilse that he succeeded in catching during the next day cost him therefore some fifteen shillings. The charges are an infallible sign that Englishmen have been here.

As in the Tweed, the take of salmon in these southern rivers has fallen off terribly. In Mandal river, a little to the westward, the fishing in the last twenty years has become one-tenth of what it was. Here, where 1600 fish used to be taken yearly, 200 only are caught. But at Boen, in the

Topdal river, which, like this, enters the sea at Christiansand, no decrease is observable. For the last ten years the average yield of the salmon fishery there has been 2733 fish per annum. In this state of things, the services of Mr. Hetting, the person deputed by the Norwegian Government to travel about the country and teach the inhabitants the method of artificially breeding salmon and other fish, have been had recourse to. Near this, breeding-places have been constructed under his auspices.

Extensive saw-mills are erected all about this place; and it is probable that the dust, which is known to bother the salmon by clogging their gills, may have diminished their productiveness, or driven them elsewhere. The vast volume of water which here descends, is cut into two distinct falls; but a third fall, a few hundred yards above, excels them in height and grandeur.

While eating my breakfast, an old dame comes in with a large basket and mysterious looks. Her mission is one of great importance—viz., to hire the bridal crown belonging to the mistress of the

house, for a wedding, which will take place at the neighbouring church this afternoon. She gets the article, and pays one dollar for the use of it. Hearing that the bridal *cortége* will sweep by at five o'clock, P.M., on its way from the church, I determined to defer my journey northwards till it had passed.

At that hour, the cry of "They come! they come!" saluted my ears. Pencil or pen of Teniers or Fielding, would that you were mine, so that I might do justice to what I saw. Down the steep hill leading to the house there came, at a slow pace, first a carriole, with that important functionary, the Kiögemester, standing on the board behind, and, like a Hansom cabman, holding the reins over the head of the bridesmaid, a fat old lady, with a voluminous pile of white upon her head, supposed to be a cap. Next came a cart, containing two spruce young maidens, who wore caps of dark check with broad strings of red satin riband, in shape a cross between those worn by the buy-a-broom girls and the present fashionable bonnet, which does *not* cover the head of English

ladies. Their jackets were of dark blue cloth, and skirt of the same material and colour, with a narrow scarlet edging, similar to that worn by peasant women in parts of Wales. Over the jacket was a coloured shawl, the ends crossed at the waist, and pinned tight. Add to this a large pink apron, and in their hands a white kerchief, after the manner of Scotch girls, on their way to kirk. After these came a carriole, with four little boys and girls clustered upon it.

But the climax is now reached. The next vehicle, a cart, contains the chief actors in the show, the bride and bridegroom, who are people of slender means. He is evidently somewhat the worse, or better, for liquor, and is dressed in the short blue seaman's jacket and trousers, which have become common in Norway wherever the old national costume has disappeared. The bride—oh! all ye little loves, lave the point of my pen in *couleur de rose*, that I may describe meetly this mature votary of Venus. There she sat like an image of the goddess Cybele; on her head a turret of pasteboard, covered with red cloth, with flamboyant mouldings of spangles, beads, and gold lace;

miserable counterfeit of the fine old Norwegian bridal crown of silver gilt! Nodding over the turret was a plume of manifold feathers—ostrich, peacock, chicken, mixed with artificial flowers; from behind it streamed a cataract of ribands of some fifteen different tints and patterns. Her plain yellow physiognomy was unrelieved by a single lock of hair.

"It is not the fashion," explained a female bystander, "for the bride to disclose any hair. It must on this occasion be all tucked in out of sight."

This ripe ogress of half a century was further dressed in a red skirt with gold belt, a jacket of black brocade, over which was a cuirass of scarlet cloth shining resplendently in front with the national ornament, the Sölje, a circular silver-gilt brooch, three inches in diameter, with some twenty gilded spoon-baits (fishermen will understand me) hung on to its rim. Frippery of divers sorts hung about her person. On each shoulder was an epaulet or bunch of white gauze bows, while the other ends of her arms were adorned by ruffles and white gloves.

As this wonderful procession halted in front of the door, the gallant Kiögemester advanced and lifted the bride in his arms out of her vehicle. As she mounted the door-steps, a decanter of brandy in hand, all wreathed in smiles and streamers, flowers and feathers, I bowed with great reverence, which evidently gratified her vanity.

"I'll tell you what she reminds me of," said my English companion, who had left his profitless fishing to see the sight, "a Tyrolese cow coming home garlanded from the châlet. No doubt this procession would look rather ridiculous in Hyde Park, but here, in this wild outlandish country, do you know, with the sombre pine-trees and the grey rocks, and wild rushing river, it does not strike me as so contemptible. She is tricked out in all the finery she can lay her hands on, and in that she is only doing the same as her sex the world over, from the belle savage of Central Africa to Queen Victoria herself."

The Kiögemester (head cook)—not that he attends to the cooking department, whatever he

might have done in former days—is a very ancient institution on this occasion. He is the soul of the whole festival. Without him everything would be in disorder or at a stand-still. Bowing to the procession, he is also bowed down by the weight of his responsibility. In his single self he is supposed to combine, at first-rate weddings, the offices of master of the ceremonies, chief butler, speechifier, jester, precentor, and, above all, of peace-maker. His activity as chief butler often calls forth a corresponding degree of activity as an assuager of broils. The baton which he frequently wields is shaped like the ancient fool's bauble. If he is a proficient in his art he will, like Mr. Robson, shine in the comic as well as the serious department, alternating original jests with solemn apophthegms. But the race is dying out. The majority are mere second-hand performers. The real adepts in the science give an *éclat* to the whole proceedings, and are consequently much in request, being sent for from long distances.

By-the-bye, I must not omit to mention that on the left arm of the bride hung a red shawl, just

like that on the arm of the Spanish bull-fighter, whose province it is to give the *coup de grace* to the devoted bull. From the manner in which she displayed it, I fancy it must have been an essential item in her toilette. Hearing no pipe and tabor, or, more strictly speaking, no fiddle, the almost invariable accompaniment of these pageants, I inquired the reason.

"They are gudfrygtig folk (God-fearing people); they will have nothing to do with such vanities," was the answer.

There seemed to me, however, to be some contradiction between this "God-fearing" scrupulosity and the size of the bride's person. It struck me, as I saw the stalwart master of the ceremonies exerting all his strength to lift her into the cart again, that it was high time she was married.

At this moment up drives a gentleman dressed in black, with dark rat-taily hair shading his sallow complexion, and a very large nose bridged by a huge pair of silver spectacles, the centre arch of which was wrapped with black riband, that it might not press too much on the keystone. This

is the parson who has tied the fatal noose, and is now wending his way homewards to his secluded manse.

Bidding adieu to my companion, who purposed driving round the coast, I now set off to the station, Mosby, to join the main route to Sætersdal, one of the wildest, poorest, and most primitive valleys of Norway, which I'm bent on exploring. On the road I once or twice narrowly escape coming into collision with the carriole of a young peasant who has been at the wedding. Mad with brandy, he keeps passing and repassing me at full gallop. The sagacious horse—I wont call him brute, a term much more applicable to his master—makes up by his circumspection for his driver's want of it. He seems to be perfectly aware of the state of things, and, while goaded into a breakneck pace, dexterously avoids the dangers.

Oak—a rare sight to me in this country—aspen (asp), sycamore (lön), hazel, juniper, bracken, fringe the sides of the road northward. Now and then a group of white "wand-like" lilies (Tjorn-blom) rises

from some silent tarn (in Old Norsk, Tjorn), looking very small indeed after those huge fellows I have left reposing in the arms of the Isis at Oxford. Their moonlight-coloured chalice is well-known to be a favourite haunt of the tiny water-elves, so I suppose the Scandinavian ones are tinier than their sisters of Great Britain.

Nor must I omit to mention the quantities of Dutch myrtle, or sweet gale (pors), with which the swampy grounds abound.* It possesses strong narcotic qualities, and is put in some districts into the beer, while, elsewhere, a decoction of it is sprinkled about the houses to intimidate the fleas, who have a great horror of it.* Lyng (lüng), some of it white, and that of a peculiar kind, which I have never seen before, also clings to the sides of the high grounds, while strawberries and raspberries of excellent taste are not wanting.

CHAPTER VI.

A dreary station—Strange bed-fellows — Broadsides—Comfortable proverb—Skarp England—Interesting particulars—A hospitable Norwegian Foged—Foster-children—The great bear-hunter—A terrible Bruin—Forty winks—The great Vennefoss—A temperance lamentation — More bear talk — Grey legs — Monosyllabic conversation—Trout fished from the briny deep—A warning to the beaux of St. James's-street—Thieves' cave—A novelette for the Adelphi.

I STOP for the night at the dreary station of Homsmoen. By a singular economy in household furniture, the cornice of the uncurtained state-bed is made to serve as a shelf, and all the crockery, together with the other household gods or goods of the establishment, are perched thereon, threatening to fall upon me if I made the slightest movement, so that my feelings, and those of Damocles, must have been not unlike; and when I did get to sleep, my slumbers were suddenly disturbed by the creeping of a mouse or

rat, not "behind the arras," for the wooden walls were bare, but under my pillow. Gracious goodness! is it my destiny then to fall a prey to these wretches? Notwithstanding, I soon dozed off to sleep again, muttering to myself something about "Coctilibus muris," and "dead for a ducat."

In the morning, when the peasant-wife brings me coffee, I tell her of the muscipular disturbances of the past night. She replies, with much *sang froid*, "O ja, de pleie at holde sig da" (Oh yes, they are in the habit of being there), *i. e.*, in the loose bed-straw.

While sipping my coffee, I read a printed address hung upon the wall, wherein "a simple Norwegian, of humble estate," urges his countrymen not to drink brandy. A second notice is an explanation of infant baptism. This is evidently to counteract the doctrines of the clergyman Lammers, who, as I have mentioned elsewhere, has founded an antipædobaptist sect. Indeed, I see in the papers advertisements of half-a-dozen works that have lately appeared on the subject. Another specimen of this wall-literature was a

collection of Norwegian proverbs, one of which might perhaps serve to reconcile an explorer in this country to indifferent accommodation. "The poor man's house is his palace." Another proverb rebuked pride, in the following manner:—"Dust is still dust, although it rise to heaven."

Next day we pass a solitary farmstead, which my attendant informs me is called Skarp England (*i.e.*, scanty, not deep-soiled, meadow-land). Were it not for those Angles, the generally reputed god-fathers of England, one would almost be inclined to derive the name of our country from that green, meadow (eng) like appearance which must have caught the attention of the immigrant Jutes and Saxons. At least, such is the surmise of Professor Radix.

"And what road is that?" I asked, pointing to a very unmacadamized byway through the forest.

"It is called Prest-vei (the Priest's-way), because that is the road the clergyman has to take to get to one of his distant churches."

"Gee up!" said I to the horse, a young one, and unused to his work, adding a slight flip with

the whip (Svöbe), a compliment which the colt returned by lashing out with his heels.

"Hilloa, Erik! this wont do; it's quite dangerous."

"Oh no, he has no back shoes; he wont hurt you—except," he afterwards added, "out of fun he should happen to strike a little higher."

The ill-omened shriek of a couple of jays which crossed the road diverted my attention, and I asked their Norwegian name, which I found to be "skov-shur" (wood-magpie) in these parts.

As we skirt the western bank of the Kile Fjord, a fresh-water lake, a dozen miles long, and abounding in fish (meget fiskerig), the man points to me a spot on the further shore where the Torrisdal River, after flowing through the lake, debouches by a succession of falls in its course to Vigeland and the sea at Christiansand.

At every station the question is, "Are you going up to the copper works?" These are at Valle, a long way up the valley. They have been discontinued some years, but, it is said, are now likely to be re-opened.

At Ketilsaa I am recommended to call on the Foged of the district, a fine, hearty sexagenarian, who gave me much valuable information respecting this singular valley and its inhabitants; besides which, what I especially valued under the circumstances, he set before me capital home-brewed beer, port wine, Trondjem's aquavit, not to mention speil aeg (poached eggs) and bear ham. Bear flesh is the best *travel* of all, say the Greenlanders, so I did not spare the last. The superstitions and tales about Huldra and fairies (here called jügere) are, the Foged tells me, dying out hereabout, though not higher up the valley.

His foster-son,* a jolly-looking gentleman, sends off a messenger to see if his own horse is near at hand, in order that I may not be detained by waiting for one at the neighbouring station, Fahret. But the pony is somewhere in the

* Foster-children are as common in Norway at the present day as they used to be in Ireland, where it was proverbially a stronger alliance than that of blood. The old sign of adoption mentioned in the Sagas was knaesetning, placing the child on the knee.

forest, so that his benevolent designs cannot be realized. Altogether, I have never visited any house in Norway where intelligence, manliness, and good-nature seemed so thoroughly at home as at the Foged's.

The station-master, Ole Gundarson Fahret, manages to get me a relay in one hour; in the interval we have a palaver.

"There was once an Englishman here," said he, "who went out bear-hunting with the greatest bear-shooter of these parts, Nils Olsen Breistöl; but they did not happen on one. Breistöl has shot fifteen bears."

"How does he manage to find them in the trackless forest?"

"Why he is continually about, and he knows of a great many bears' winter-lairs (Björn-hi); and when the bear is asleep, he goes and pokes him out."

"But is it not dangerous?"

"Sometimes. There was a great bear who was well known for fifty miles round, for he was as grey as a wolf, and lame of one leg, having been injured, it

was thought, in a fight with a stallion. He killed a number of horses; and great rewards were offered to the killer of him. The people in Mandal, to the west, offered thirty dollars; he had been very destructive down there. Well, Breistöl found out where he lay one winter, and went up with another man. Out he comes, and tries to make off. They are always ræd (frightened) at first, when they are surprised in their lair. But Breistöl sent a ball into him (this Norsk Mudjekeewis, by-the-bye, makes his own rifles), and the bear stopped short, and rushed at him. Just at this moment, however, he got another bullet from the other man, which stopped him. After waiting for a moment, he turned round, and charged at the new aggressor, who dodged behind a tree; meanwhile, Breistöl had loaded, and gave him another ball; and so they kept firing and dodging; and it actually took fifteen balls to kill him, he was so big and strong. The last time they fired, they came close to him, and shot two bullets into his head, only making one hole; then he died. The usual reward from the Government is five

dollars, but Breistöl got fifteen. The Mandal people, when they heard the great grey bear was dead, gave him nothing. Fand (fiend)! but he was immensely big (uhyr stor), so fat and fleshy."

"And how long does the bear sleep in winter?" I inquired.

"He goes in about Sanct Michael's-tid, and comes out at the beginning of April."

"And how many bears are there in one hole?"

"Only one; unless the female has young late in the autumn. A man in these parts once found an old he-bear (Manden), with a she-bear, and three young cubs, all in one hole. I think there are as many bears as ever there were in the country. There was a lad up in the forest, five years ago; a bear struck at him, but missed him, only getting his cap, which stuck on the end of his claws. This seemed to frighten the brute, and he made off. The little boy didn't know what a danger he had escaped; he began to cry for the loss of his cap, and wanted to go after it. Now that did not happen by chance. V Herre Gud

har Haand i slig (God our master has a hand in such like things). We have a proverb, that the bear has ten men's strength, and the wit of twelve; but that's neither here nor there. Björnen kan vaere meget staerk, men han faa ikke Magt at draebe mennesker, Mnaar Han ikke tillade det. (The bear may be very strong, but he has not the power to kill men unless He permits it.")

In which proper sentiment I of course acquiesced, and took leave of the intelligent Schusskaffer.

My attendant on the next stage, Ole Michelsen Vennefoss, derived his last name from the great cataract on the Otterelv, near which he lives. It is now choked up with timber. But all this, he tells me, will move in the autumn, when the water rises; although, in the north of the country, the rivers at that time get smaller and smaller, and, in winter time, with the ice that covers them, occupy but a small part of the accustomed bed.

A few years ago, a friend of his had a narrow escape at these falls: the boat he was in turned over just above the descent, and he disappeared

from view; down hurried the boat, and providentially was not smashed to pieces. At the bottom of the fall it caught against a rock, and righted again, and up bobbed the drowned man, having been under the boat all the time. His friends managed to save him.

On the road we overtake a man driving, who offers me schnaps in an excited manner.

"Ah," said Ole, mournfully, "he has been to the By, and bought some brantviin; they never can resist the temptation. When he gets home, there will be a Selskab (party). People for miles round know where he has been, and they will come and hear the news, and drink themselves drunk."

Ole is one of the so-called Lesere, or Norwegian Methodists, disciples of Hauge, whose son is the clergyman of a parish near here. They may often be detected by their drawling way of speaking.

"Well, Ole," said I, "did you ever see any of these bears they talk so much about?"

"Yes, that I have. I saw the old lame bear that Breistöl shot. I was up at the stöl (châlet) four years ago come next week, with my two

sisters. We were sitting outside the building, just about this time of the evening, when it was getting dusk; all of a sudden, the horse came galloping to us as hard as ever he could tear. I knew at once it was a bear; and, sure enough, close behind him, came the beast rushing out of the wood. We all raised a great noise and shouting, on which the bear stopped, and ran away. Poor blacky had a narrow escape; he bears the marks of the bear's claws on his hind quarters. I could put my four fingers in them."

Quite so, hummed I—

> The sable score of fingers four
> Remain on that *horse* impressed.

"But what do the bears eat, when they can't get cattle?"

"Grass, and berries, and ants (myren)."

"But don't the ants sting him?"

"Oh! no; no such thing. A friend of mine saw a bear come to one of those great ant-hills you have passed in the woods. He put out his tongue, and laid it on the ant-hill till it was covered with ants, and then slipped it back into

his mouth. They can't hurt him, his tongue is too thick-skinned for that."

"Does the bear eat anything in winter?"

"Nothing, I believe. I have seen one or two that were killed then; their stomach was as empty as empty—wanted no cleaning at all. I think that's the reason they are such cowards then. I have always more pluck when my stomach is full. Hav'n't you?"

It struck me that there are many others besides the artless Norwegian who, if they chose, must confess to a similar weakness.

"But the wolves (ulven) don't go to sleep in winter; what do they eat?"

"Ulven?—what's that?"

"I mean Graa-been (grey-legs)."

"Ah! you mean Skrüb.* In winter they steal what they can, and, when hard pressed, they

* In this part of Norway the wolf is known by no other name. Like graa-been (grey-legs) elsewhere in Norway, so here skrüb is a euphemism for wolf. The word is evidently derived from skrübba, to scrub, and alludes to the rough dressing or scrubbing to be expected at the claws of that beast. This disinclination to use the real

devour a particular sort of clay. That's well known; it's plain to see from their skarn (dung.)"

Ole further tells me that a pair of eagles build in a tall tree about a mile from his house. The name "ulv," is no doubt due to the ancient superstition of the "varulf" (wer-wolf).

Oh! was it wer-wolf in the wood,
Or was it mermaid in the sea,
Or was it man or vile woman,
My own true love, that misshaped thee?

A heavier weird shall light on her
Than ever fell on vile woman,
Her hair shall grow rough and her teeth grow lang,
And on her fore feet shall she gang.

See Grimm. *Deutsche Mythologie*, 1047. In the war of 1808 it was commonly believed in Sweden that those of their countrymen who were made prisoners by the Russians were changed by them into wer or were-wolves, and sent home to plague their country. The classical reader will remember the Scythian people mentioned by Herodotus, who all and several used to turn wolves for a few days in every year. The Swedes go still further in their reluctance to call certain animals by their real names. Not only do they call the bear *the old one*, or *grandfather*, and the wolf *grey-foot*, but the fox is *blue-foot*, or *he that goes in the forest;* the seal is *brother Lars*, while such small deer as rats and mice are known respectively as the *long-bodied* and the *small-grey*.

young ones have just flown; he had not time to take them, although there is a reward of half-a-dollar a-head. Fancy a native of the British Isles suffering an eagle to hatch, and fly off with its brood in quiet.

"Hvor skal de ligge inat?" (where shall you lie to-night?) he inquired, as we proceeded.

"I don't think I shall go further than Gulsmedoen, to-night," I replied.

"There is no accommodation at all at the station," he said; "but at Senum, close by, you can get a night's lodging."

It was dark when we arrived at Senum, which lay down a break-neck side-path, where the man had to lead the horse. On our tapping at the door, a female popped her head out of a window, but said nothing. After a pause, my man says "Quells," literally, whiling, or resting-time. This was an abbreviation for "godt quell" (good evening). "Quells" was the monosyllabic reply of the still small voice at the porthole.

"Tak for senast" (thanks for the last), was my guide's next observation.

"Tak for senast," the other responded from above.

"The ice being now somewhat broken, the treble of "the two voices" inquired—

"What man is that with you?"

"A foreigner, who wants a night's lodging."

Before long, the farmer and his wife were busy upstairs preparing a couch for me, with the greatest possible goodwill; nor would they hear of Ole returning home that night, so he, too, obtained sleeping quarters somewhere in the establishment.

I find, what the darkness had prevented me from seeing, that this house is situated at the southern end of the Aarfjord, a lake of nearly forty miles in length. Mine host has this evening caught a lot of fine trout in the lake with the nets. They are already in salt—everything is salted in this country—but I order two or three fat fellows out of the brine, and into some fresh water against the morning, when they prove excellent. So red and fat! The people here say they are better than salmon.

Rain being the order of the next day, I post up my journal. In the afternoon I resume my journey

by the road on the further side of the lake. Until very lately a carriage road was unknown here. The Fogderi, or Bailewick, in which we now are, is called Robygd: a reminiscence, it is said, of the days not long since over, when the sole means of locomotion up the valley (bygd) was to row (roe). The vehicle being a common cart, with no seat, a bag is stuffed with heather for me to sit on; and this acts as a buffer to break the force of the bumps which the new-made road and the springless cart kept giving each other, while, in reality, it was I that came in for the brunt of the pommelling. The Norwegian driver sat on the hard edge of the cart, regardless of the shocks, and as tough apparently as the birch-wood of which the latter was composed. It wont do for a person who is at all *made-up* to risk a journey in Saetersdal: he would infallibly go to pieces, and the false teeth be strewed about the path after the manner of those of the serpent or dragon sown by Jason on the Champ de Mars. Armed men rose from the earth on that occasion, and something of the kind took place now. Don't start, reader, it was only in story.

"Look at that hole," said my attendant, pointing to an opening half-way up the limestone cliff, surrounded by trees and bushes. "That is the——"

"Cave of the Dragon?" interrupted I, abstractedly.

"The Tyve Helle (thieves' cave), which goes in one hundred feet deep. For a long time they were the terror of all Saetersdal. The only way to the platform in front of the cave was by a ladder. One of their band, who pretended to be a Tulling (idiot), used to go begging at the farm-houses, and spying how the ground lay.

"On one occasion they carried off along with some cattle the girl who tended them. Poor soul! she could not escape, they kept such a sharp watch on her. The captain of the band meanwhile wanted to marry her; she pretended to like the idea, and the day before that fixed for the wedding asked leave just to go down to the farm where she used to live and steal the silver Brudestads (bridal ornaments), which were kept there. The thieves gave her leave;—they

could dispense with the parson, but not with this. But first they made her swear she would not speak to a soul at the house. At midnight, Asjer, as she was called, arrived at her former home, to the astonishment of the good folks. She at once proceeded to take a piece of white linen, a scrap of red home-spun cloth, and a pair of shears. This done, she went to the chimney-corner and told the picewood-beam, 'I have been stolen by robbers; they live in a cave in the forest, I will cut little bits of red cloth on the road to it; to-morrow the captain marries me. To-night, when they are all drunk and asleep, I will hang out the piece of white cloth.' Without exchanging a word with the inmates, she then set off back. The master of the house and a few friends collected, and followed her track. At night-fall they saw the flag waved from the mouth of the cave. In they rushed upon the thieves, who, unable to escape, threw themselves over the precipice. The captain, suspecting her to be the author of the surprise, seized her by the apron as he dashed over the ledge, determined that she should die with him. But

the leader of the bonders, a ready-witted fellow, cut her apron-strings with his knife, just in the nick of time, so that she was saved; and the robber, in his fall, took nothing with him but her apron."

CHAPTER VII.

A wolf trap—The heather—Game and game-preserves—An optical delusion—Sumptuous entertainment—Visit to a Norwegian store-room—Petticoats—Curious picture of the Crucifixion—Fjord scenery—How the priest Brun was lost—A Saetersdal manse—Frightfully hospitable—Eider-down quilts—Costume of a Norwegian waiting-maid—The tartan in Norway—An ethnological inquiry—Personal characteristics—The sect of the Haugians—Nomad life in the far Norwegian valleys—Trug—Memorials of the Vikings—Female Bruin in a rage—How bears dispose of intruders—Mercantile marine of Norway—The Bad-hus—How to cook brigands—Winter clothing.

Close by Langerack we pass a wolf-trap (baas), formed on the principle of our box-trap, for catching rats, only that the material is thick pine-boles fastened side by side. More than one wolf and lynx have been caged here.

The heather still continues plentiful; I particularly note this, as in the more northerly parts of

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the country, *e.g.*, about Jerkin, this beautiful vestiture of the rocks and moors is seldom seen, except in very little bits. What a pity that none of our British grouse proper (*Tetrao Scoticus*) return the visit of the Norwegian ptarmigan to Scotland, and found a colony in these parts; they would escape at all events those systematic traffickers in ornithological blood, by whom these unfortunates are bought and sold as per advertisement. Blackcock and capercailzie, as usual, are to be found in the lower woods, and ptarmigan higher up. About here there are no trees of large size remaining; the best have long since been cut down and floated to the sea. It would do a nurseryman's heart good to see the groups of hardy little firs, self-sown, sprouting up in every crevice with an exuberance of health and strength, and asserting their right to a hearing among the soughing branches of their taller neighbours, who rise patronizingly above them. The seed falling upon stony ground does not fail to come up, notwithstanding, and bring forth fruit a hundred-fold and more.

The valley here, which has been opening ever

since I left Vennefoss, continues to improve in looks; it is now almost filled by the Fjord, and appears to come to an end some distance higher up, by the intervention of a block of mountains; but if there be any truth in the map, this is an optical delusion, the valley running up direct northward, nearly one hundred and fifty miles from Christiansand, and reaching a height at Bykle of nearly two thousand feet above the sea.

At the clean and comfortable station of Langerack I light upon a treasure in the shape of a dozen or two of hens' eggs; very small indeed, it is true, as they were not quite so big as a bantam's. Six of these I immediately take, and an old lady, with exceedingly short petticoats, commences fry ing them, while I grind the coffee which she has just roasted.

After a goodly entertainment, for part of which I was indebted to my own wallet, I go with her to the Stabur, or store-room, where, with evident pride and pleasure, she shows me all her valuables; conspicuous among these was a full set of bridal costume, minus the crown, which was let

out. The bridal belt was of yellow leather, and covered with silver-gilt ornaments, all of the same pattern, to each of which is suspended a small bracteate of the same metal, which jingles with every step of the bride. What particularly attracted my attention were the three woollen petticoats worn by the bride one over the other. The first is of a dingy white colour, and is, in fact, the same as the every-day dress of the females. The second is of blue cloth, with red and green stripes round the bottom. The third, which is worn outermost, is of scarlet, with gold and green edging. Of course if these were all of the same length the under-ones would not be visible; and thus the object of wearing such a heap of clothes—love of display—would be defeated; so, while the undermost is long, the next is less so, and the next shorter still. Each one is very heavy, so the weight of the three together must be great indeed. The whole reminds one of harlequin at a country fair. But, while he comes on unwieldily and shabbily dressed, and as he takes off one coat and waistcoat after another grows smarter and smarter, and at last

fines down into a gay harlequin, the Norwegian bride, by a contrary process, grows smarter and smarter with each article of clothing that she assumes.

The most remarkable thing about these bridal petticoats is the skirt behind, which is divided by plaits like the flutings of a Doric column; while these, towards the bottom or base bulge out into two or three rounded folds, which stick out considerably from the person. Hear this, ye Miss Weazels, who condemn crinoline as a new-fangled institution, whereas in fact the idea is evidently taken from the primæval customs of Saetersdal. The support of this dead weight of clothing are not, as might be expected, the hips, for the whole system of integuments comes right up over the bosom, and is upheld by a couple of very short braces or shoulder-straps. A jacket under these circumstances is almost superfluous. It is of blue cloth with gold edging, and only reaches down to the arm-holes.

These vestments are no doubt of very ancient cut. In the district of Lom another sort of dress

was once the fashion. The coat was of white wadmel, with dark coloured embroidery, and silver buttons as big as a dollar. The collar stood up. The waistcoat was scarlet, and also embroidered. White knee-breeches of wash-leather, garters of coloured thread, and shoes adorned with large silver buckles, set off the lower man. This dress went out at the beginning of the century. In Romerike, and elsewhere, there was on the back of the coat a quaint piece of embroidery pointing up like the spire of a church, and green, red, or blue, according to the parish of the wearer. At the public masquerades in Christiania, these dresses may still be seen.

But I had forgotten the old lady in the contemplation of the wardrobe. She appears to think she shall make me understand her jargon better by shouting in my ears—a common mistake—and while she does so, she skips about the chamber with all the agility of the old she-goat before the door. The proverb says, "Need makes the old wife run," but she ran without any apparent cause. Finally, in her enthusiasm, she goes the length of

putting one of these petticoats on—don't be alarmed, fair reader—*over* her own, to show me how it looks. Besides the above state apparel, mutton and pork-hams, with other comestibles, find a secure place in the store-room.

In the sitting-room of the house is a remarkable picture of our Saviour on the cross, with various quaint devices round it. It is known to be more than three hundred years old, and no doubt dates from the Roman Catholic times. Like most of the peasants, who are exceedingly tenacious of these "Old-sager" (old-world articles), the master of the house won't part with the picture for any consideration.

As a boat is procurable, I determine to vary the mode of travelling by going by water to the station ———, and the more so as this will enable me to try for a trout while I am resting my shaken limbs. There being no wind to ruffle the water, I only took one or two trout. A man on the lake, who was trailing a rough-looking fly, was not a little astonished at my artificial minnow. The Fjord is very fine. Pretty bays, nestling under the bare

lofty mountains, and here and there a beach of yellow sand, fringing a grassy slope, while behind these, Scotch fir, birch, and aspen throw their shadows over the water.

"You see that odde (point)," says my old waterman; "that is Lobdal point. It was just there that Priest Brun had the misfortune to be lost, twenty years ago come Yule. He had been preaching down below, at one of his four churches, and was sleighing home again on the ice. The Glocker (precentor) was driving behind him, when he saw him suddenly disappear, horse and all. It was a weak place in the ice, and, there being snee-dicke (snow-thickness) at the time, the priest had not seen any symptoms of danger. Poor man, I knew him well; he was a very good person. He never received Christian burial, for his body was never found." Such are the incidents that checquer the life of a Norwegian parson.

It was so nearly dark when we arrived at ———, that we had a difficulty in finding the landing-place, to which, however, we were guided by something that looked like a house in the gloaming.

"And where am I to lodge?" asked I of the boatman. "Is the station far off?"

"Yes, a good distance. You had best lie at Priest ——'s, there."

"But I have not the pleasure of his acquaintance."

"That does not matter the least. He is forfaerdelig gjestfri (frightfully hospitable) og meget snil (and very good)."

So I make bold to grope my way to the house, and, finding the door, tap at it. It is opened by a short, good-humoured looking person, the clergyman himself, who quiets the big dog that I had kept at bay with my fishing-rod, asks me who I am, and bids me come in and be welcome, as if he had known me all the days of my life. Few minutes elapse before I am eating cold meat and drinking ale; during the repast chatting with my host on all sorts of matters. Supper ended, he shows me to the best chamber, or stranger's room, where I am soon reposing luxuriously under an eider-down coverlet. This I kicked off in my slumbers, it being evidently too hot for an Englishman in

summer time, even in Norway. What delightful things these eider-downs must be in the cold of a northern winter.

A young female servant, Helvig by name, brings my boots in the morning. She was clad in the working-day dress of the country maidens. To begin with the beginning, or her head. It is covered with a coloured cotton couvrechef. Her masculine chemise is fastened at the throat by two enormous studs of silver filigree, bullet shaped, and is, below this, further confined by a silver brooch (Norwegicè "ring"), shaped like a heart. Her petticoat, which covers very little of her black worsted stockings, makes up for its shortcomings in that direction, by reaching right up above her bosom. It is of a dingy white wool, and is edged with three broad stripes of black. On Sunday her petticoat is black, with red or blue edging.

She brings me her tartan of red wool with white stripes for my inspection. It is called "kjell," a word which occurs in the old ballad of "The Gay Goss Hawk."

> Then up and got her seven sisters,
> And sewed to her a kell.

There it means pall, but the Norwegian word is also used of any coverlet. The maidens wear it just like a Parisian lady would her shawl, *i.e.*, below the shoulders, and tight over the elbows. The married women, however, carry it like the Scotch plaid, over one shoulder and under the other arm, with their baby in the kolpos, or sinus, in front.

This article of dress, which is sometimes white, striped with red—the stripes being most frequent at the ends—and also the above manner of wearing it, are thought to corroborate the tradition that these people are a Scotch colony. The language, too, contains many words not known elsewhere in Norway, but used in England. Instead of "skee," they say "spon," which is nothing but the Icelandic "spónn," and our "spoon." In the words kniv (knife), and knap (button), the k is silent before n; whereas, elsewhere in Norway, it is pronounced. L, too, is silent before d, as with us; "skulde" (should) being pronounced "skud," or "shud." The common word for a river in Norway is "elv;" here it is "aas," pronounced "ose,"

which is nothing but the frequent "ooze" of England, meaning, in fact, "a stream generally."

"What sort of people are the peasants about here?" I asked of the priest.

"They have many peculiarities. Formerly, they were looked upon by the rest of Norway as a kind of Abderites, stupid fellows; but they are not so much stupid, far from it, as quaint and comical. Indeed, their dress makes them look odd and simple. You must know that ten years ago the only road up the valley was by water, and about the only travellers the priest and a merchant or two. These Westland people are very different from the Eastlanders; for, whereas the latter are more 'alvorlig' (serious), and 'modig' (plucky), these are more 'blid' (gentle), more 'dorsk' and 'doven' (lazy and indolent), and fond of sleeping three times a day. Formerly they were inveterate fatalists, so much so that for a long time they would not hear of going to a doctor, if they were ill, or an accident happened. They used also to believe in Trolls (fairies), but that is fast exploding hereabouts. Yet they are still impressed with a

belief in 'giengângere' (wraiths), and that the powers of evil are supernaturally at work around us. This makes them so fearful of going out after dark. Of late years a great change has been wrought among many of them, since the sect of the Lesere, or Haugians, began to prevail. They have forsworn Snorro Sturleson's Chronicle and the historical Sagas of the country, which the Norwegian bonder used to be fond of reading, and in their cottages you will find nothing but the Bible and books of devotion. To read anything else they consider sinful, as being liable to turn away their minds from spiritual objects."

"And do you think that, practically, they are better Christians?"

"Undoubtedly some of them are God-fearing persons, while others only adopt this tone from motives of self-interest."

"How comes it that there are so few people about?"

"Ah! I must tell you. There is one remarkable custom in the valley—indeed, it is not impossible that it derives its name, Saetersdal

(Valley of Saeters), from it.* During the summer the saeter is not inhabited by a single girl with her cows, as elsewhere in Norway, but by the whole of the farmer's family. At such times I have no parishioners. They are all off. For the last three Sundays I have had no service. Each farmer possesses two or three of these saeters or stöls, and when they have cut the grass, and the cattle has eaten up the alpine shrubs at one spot, they move to another. It is a regular nomadic life as long as it lasts, which is the best part of the summer.

"In the winter, the hay made in the summer is brought down from the mountain on sledges. The snow being very deep, the ponies would sink in but for a contrivance called 'trug,' which is peculiar to these parts of Norway. Here is one," said he, as Helvig, with great alacrity, brought in the apparatus in question. It was a

* Still the mountain châlet is now no longer known here by the name of "saeter," but by that of "stöl." "Saeter" is most probably derived from the word "sitte," to sit=to dwell; the technical phrase for a person being at the mountain dairy being "sitte paa stölen."

strong hoop of birch-wood, about a foot in diameter. From its sides ran four iron chains, of two or three links each, to a ring in the centre. Attached to the hoop was some wicker-work. Into this basket the pony's foot is inserted, and the wicker secured to the fetlock, while the shoe rests on the iron ring and chains. Armed with this anti-sinking machine, the horse keeps on the surface, and can travel with tolerable expedition. Men wear a similar contrivance, but smaller.

"Are there any bauta-stones, or suchlike reminiscences of olden times in this part of the valley?"

"Very few. From its secluded position it never was of any great historical note. It is near the sea that the Vikings were most at home, and left behind them memorials. Here is an old cross-bow and an axe, such as the bonders used to carry."

These axes were called "hand-axes," from the fact that, when not otherwise used, the wearer took the iron in his hand, and used the weapon as a walking-stick. Sometimes they were even

taken to church (see *Oxonian in Norway*, 2nd edition, p. 336). This one had the date 1651 inscribed upon it, and, together with the handle, was adorned with figuring. In the passage I also saw a halbert and a spear, and a round spoon, on which was inscribed the date 1614, and the legend, "Mit haab til Gud" (My hope in God).

"Have you a good breed of cattle here?"

"Not particularly. We get all ours from Fyrrisdal, four Norsk miles to the east of this. The best 'qvaeg-răcĕ' in all Norway is to be found there."

"I see all your horses are stallions. They must be very troublesome. I drove two or three marked with severe bites."

"That may be; but the bonders here, most of whom have only one horse, find them answer their purpose best. The stallion is never off his feed, even after the hardest work, and will eat anything. Besides which, he is much more enduring, and can manage to drive off a wolf, provided he is not hobbled."

"Are there many bears about this summer?"

"Yes, indeed. A man called Herjus, of Hyllestad, which you will pass, has been some weeks in our doctor's hands from wounds received from a bear. He and another were in the forest, when they fell in with a young bear, which immediately climbed up a tree. The other man went to cut a stick, while Herjus threw stones at the cub. Suddenly he hears a terrific growl, and at the same moment receives a tremendous blow on the head. It was the female bear, who, like all female bears in a passion, had walked up to him, biped fashion, and, with a 'take that for meddling with my bairn,' felled him to the ground. Over him," continued the parson, "fell the bear, so blinded with rage, that she struck two or three blows beyond him. His companion had made a clean pair of heels of it. The bear next seized the unfortunate wight in her arms, and dragged him to a precipice for the purpose of hurling him over. Herjus at once feigned to be dead, that he might not become so. The bear perceiving this, and thinking it no use to give herself any more trouble about a dead man, left him. Fearful lest she

should return, he scrambled down the steep, and got over a stream below. It is said that the bears, like witches, don't like to cross a running stream; that was the reason of his movement. It was lucky he did so, for no sooner was he over than the bear came back to see that all was right, and perceived that she had been hoaxed, but did not attempt to follow."

"But do the bears really drag people over precipices?"*

"It is said so. Near Stavanger a poor fellow was attacked by a bear, who skinned his face from

* I asked this same question of the intelligent and obliging curator of the Bergen Museum. He replied that it was generally believed to be the case, though bear-stories, unless well authenticated, must be taken *cum grano*.

The following statistics of the amount of wild animals destroyed in Norway in three years may be interesting—

	Bears.	Wolves.	Lynxes.	Gluttons.	Eagles.	Owls.	Hawks.
1848	264	247	144	57	2498	369	527
1849	325	197	110	76	2142	343	485
1850	246	191	118	39	2426	268	407

scalp to chin, and then dragged him through the trees to a precipice. At this horrible instant the poor wretch clutched a tree, and hung to it with such desperation, that the bear, who heard help coming, left him, and retreated. The king has given him a pension of thirty-five dollars a-year."

"And the wolves?" asked I.

"There are plenty of them. I caught one not long ago with strychnine. The doctor, who has lately left, caught a great many one winter. Brun, my predecessor, who was drowned, took seven wolves in one night with poison, close by the parsonage. They are also taken in the baas (*i. e.*, such a trap as I described above). Some winters there are very few, while at other times they abound. A fjeld-frass (glutton) was not long ago taken in a trap. We have also lynxes of two sorts—the katte-gaupe (cat-lynx), which is yellow, with dark spots; and the skrübb-gaupe (wolf-lynx), which is wolf-coloured."

The church, like all modern Norwegian churches, is neat, but nothing more. Its very ancient predecessor, which was pulled down a short time

ago, abounded, like most of those built in Roman Catholic times, with beautiful wood-carving. Near the church is a fine sycamore, two hundred years old, and three picturesque weeping birches. Oaks, I find, ceased at Guldsmedoen.

"Ah!" said the priest, in the course of conversation, "this is a marvellous country, when you consider its peculiar nature—more barren rock by far than anything else. And yet our opkomst (progress) is wonderful since we became a free nation. With a population of less than a million and a half, we have a mercantile marine second only to that of England. We have as much freedom as is consistent with safety; the taxes are light, and the overplus, after paying the expenses of the Government, is devoted to internal improvements. None of it goes to Sweden, as it did formerly to Denmark; it is all spent on the country. Yes, sir, everything thrives better in a free country; the air is healthier, the very trees grow better."

Sentiments like these, which are breathed by every Norskman, of course found a cordial

response from an Englishman. I only hope that Norway will be suffered to go on progressing uninterruptedly.

Never having seen the interior of what is called the Bad-hus (bath-house), I go with my host to see this regular appendage to all country-houses. The traveller in Norway has no doubt often seen at some distance from the main house a log-hut, round the door of which the logs are blackened by smoke. This is the bad-hus. The mill-stones in this country are so indifferent, that it is found necessary to bake the corn previous to grinding it. It is thus performed. In the centre of the log-house, which is nearly air-proof, is a huge stone oven heaped over with large stones. Near the roof within are shelves on which the grain is placed; a wood fire is then lit in the oven, the door of the hut is closed, and the temperature inside soon becomes nearly equal to that of the oven itself, and the corn speedily dries.

It is said that this name, "bad-hus," is derived from a custom which formerly prevailed

among the people of using this receptacle in winter time as a kind of hot-air bath. The peasant, also, put it to another use. Not being the cleanliest people in the world, their bed-clothes become at times densely inhabited. When the colony becomes overstocked, the clothes are brought hither, and a short spell of the infernal temperature proves too much for the small animals, as they are not blessed with the heat-enduring capabilities of the cricket or salamander. In fact, the clothes become literally too hot to hold them, and they share the fate of Higgin-bottom.

This reminds me of an old tale concerning one Staale, of Aasheim, not very far from here. This man had murdered his brother about two hundred and fifty years ago. His life was spared on condition that he would rid the country of seven outlaws who harried the country and defied every attempt to take them. Staale, who was a dare-devil villain, having discovered their retreat, went thither in rags, and showing them that he was a bird of similar plumage, proposed forgathering

with them. The robbers were charmed at the idea of such an accession to their number. Meanwhile, Staale complained that his rags were full of parasites, and at his request a huge kettle was hung over the fire for the purpose of boiling the creatures out. As soon as the water boiled Staale dashed the fluid into the faces of the robbers who lay asleep on the floor, not expecting so warm a reception. Thus reduced, for the moment at least, to a condition like that of that precious brigand, Polyphemus, they fell an easy prey to Staale, who dashed their brains out with a crow-bar. He was, however, near being overmastered by an old woman who ministered to the wants of the robbers, like the delicate Leonarda in *Gil Blas*, and had escaped the baptism that had been administered to the rest. After a hard struggle, however, he overcame the virago, and thus obtained his life and freedom, which had been forfeited for his misdeeds.

In the bad-hus were also suspended the winter cloak of his Reverence, composed of six beautiful wolf-skins; the sledge-apron, made of a huge

black bear-skin, with the fur leggings and gloves, also used to keep out the cold in driving. These articles are generally hung up in another part of the premises, the ammoniacal vapours of which are much disliked and avoided by moths and other fur-destroyers.

CHAPTER VIII.

Peculiar livery—Bleke—A hint to Lord Breadalbane—Enormous trout—Trap for timber logs—Exciting scene—Melancholy Jacques in Norway—The new church of Sannes—A clergyman's Midsummer-day dream—Things in general at Froisnaes—Pleasing intelligence—Luxurious magpies—A church without a congregation—The valley of the shadow of death—Mouse Grange—A tradition of Findal—Fable and feeling—A Highland costume in Norway—Ancestral pride—Grand old names prevalent in Saetersdal—Ropes made of the bark of the lime-tree—Carraway shrub—Government schools of agriculture—A case for a London magistrate—Trout fishing in the Högvand—Cribbed, cabined, and confined—A disappointment—The original outrigger—The cat-lynx—A wealthy Norwegian farmer—Bear-talk—The consequence of taking a drop too much—Story of a Thuss—Cattle conscious of the presence of the hill people—Fairy music.

TAKING leave with many thanks of my worthy host and the young lady who is presiding in the absence of his wife, both of whom had shown me no small kindness, I start by boat up the lake.

The priest has no less than fourteen Huusmaend (see *Oxonian in Norway*, p. 8), and one of them, Knut, undertakes to row me up to Froisnaes. His dress is that of the country. Trousers up to the neck-hole of grey wadmel, striped at the sides with a streak of black, and fastened with four buttons at the ankles—the button-holes worked with green worsted ending in red.

As usual, I killed two birds with one stone—advancing northward, and catching trout at the same time. I had flies as well as a minnow trailing behind, and took fish with both, the biggest about a pound weight.

"That's not a trout; that's a Bleke," exclaimed Knut, as I hauled in a fish of about the same weight, but which pulled with a strength beyond his size. They are much fatter and of finer flavour than the trout. By subsequent experience I found Knut to be right. Such a fish at the *Trois Frères* would fetch its weight in silver. The flesh was paler than that of the trout. Externally, it was of a beautiful dark green on the back, while the sides were whitish, but shaded with a

light green. The spots were more purple than those of the trout, while the head and extremity of the body before the tail tapered beautifully. It somewhat resembled a herring in shape: Knut compared it to a mackerel. They never, he said, exceed a pound in weight, but are stronger than a trout of equal size. Here, then, was a species of fish totally unknown to Great Britain. Indeed, there are many fish in Scandinavia which it would be worth while to try and naturalize among us. The cross, for instance, between a Jack and a Perch to be found in the Swedish lakes, and better than either; why does not Lord Breadalbane, the second introducer of capercailzie into Scotland, or some other patriot, apply his mind and resources to this subject?

The trout in this lake run to an enormous size. They have been seen two or three ells long. These large fish are seldom visible, generally frequenting the deeps. In all these waters the saying is, "we catch most fish in the autumn" (til Hösten, Scotice, ha'st): *i. e.*, when the fish approach the shallows to spawn.

The waters of the lake, which were in some places from one to two miles broad, and studded with wooded islands, now contract, and separate into two narrow channels. Advantage is taken of the situation to set up a log-trap below—*i.e.*, a circle of logs fastened end to end with birchen ropes rove through eye-holes. In this pound are caught the timbers that have been floated down from above. Hundreds of prisoners are thus caged without any further fastening; but escape is impossible, unless they leap over the barrier, or dive beneath it, both which are forbidden by the laws of gravity. If they were not thus formed into gangs they would get playing the truant, and lounging in the various bays, or become fixed fast on shore. When the circle is full, advantage is taken of the north wind which prevails, and off the whole convoy is started down south without any human attendants.

Before long we reach a very striking spot. The lake, which had again widened, now narrows suddenly, and the vast body of limpid water rushes with tremendous rapidity through a deep groove,

about thirty feet wide, cut by Nature through smooth sloping rocks. Ever and anon a log, which has been floating lazily from above, and has, all on a sudden, found itself in this hurly-burly, comes shooting through in a state of the utmost agitation, occasionally charging, like a battering-ram, at a projecting angle of the wall; while others, with no less impetuous eagerness, race through the passage a dozen abreast; the outsiders, however, get caught in the eternal backstream below, and go bumping, shoving, and jostling each other for hours before they can again escape from the magic eddy.

The stream being too strong to admit of our getting the parson's boat up this defile—let alone the perfect certainty of a smash if we attempt to run the gauntlet through this band of Malays running amuck—the boatman starts off with some of my luggage on his shoulders to engage a boat at the ferryman's, lying through the pine grove.

While he is gone, I amuse myself with watching the logs; and had I been gifted with the moralizing powers of the melancholy Jacques, I might easily

have set down in the journal some apt comparisons about the people of this world racing each other in the battle of life, pushing, scrambling, dashing other people out of their road. "If a man gets in your way, stamp on him," says one of Thackeray's people; and some of them suddenly brought up all of a heap in the dark inexorable round of one of life's backstreams. The Storthing has, I hear, at length decided that there shall be a bridge thrown across this gully; the only wonder is that it has not been done long ago, as it might be built at a very trifling expense, and the foundations are all ready to hand.

Above the lone hut of the ferryman, who is a famous wood-carver, lies the new church of Sannes, rising on some flat meadow land. What a contrast that pure white image of it, reflected athwart the waters, presents to the huge, dreary, threatening shadows projected by yonder dark, weather-stained masses of everlasting mountains. And yet, when the rocks and mountains shall fall in universal ruin from their lofty estate, that humble spire,—although, perhaps, originally suggested by the towering

Igdrasil of Scandinavian Pagan mythology,—shall rise still higher and higher, and pierce the clouds, and the small, and seemingly perishable fane, expand into the vast imperishable temple of the God above.

From its various associations, such a sight as that is very pleasing to the traveller in a lone country like this, where Nature's brow is almost always contracted, frowning in gloomy, uncompromising grandeur. No larks carolling blithely up aloft; but instead, the scream of some bird of prey, the grating croak of the raven, the demon screech of the lom, or the hoarse murmur of the angry waterfall.

At Froisnaes I spend the night, intending next day to cross the lake, and walk over the mountains opposite to another lake, called the Högvand, the trout of which are renowned throughout the valley. After undergoing the usual artillery of questions and staring, I fall to discussing my frugal meal of trout and potatoes, while the good woman fills the bedstead with fresh straw. In this she is assisted by one of her sons, whose

trousers rise up to his gullet, and are actually kept up by the silver studs of his shirt collar. These, with a brooch, are the lad's own handiwork, he having learned the art of the silversmith from a travelling descendant of Tubal Cain. He is very anxious to buy a gold coin from me, and brings half an old gold piece, and asks the value of it. By poising it in the balance against half a sovereign, I am enabled to guide him respecting its true worth.

"Now then," said the landlady, "the bed is quite clear of fleas, though I wont say there are not some on the floor."

Having no cream, she brings me her only egg, which, after a sound drubbing, I force to do duty as cream to my coffee. She laments that she has no more eggs. All the family has been away at the Stöl, and have only just returned, and the thieving magpies took the opportunity, in lieu, I suppose of the good luck which they bring to the household, to suck the eggs as fast as the hen laid them. Guardian angels of this description come expensive.

The gude-man of the house, whose hair is cut as short as Oliver Twist's—probably for similar reasons—with the exception of a scalping lock on his forehead, now comes up the steep, unbanistered stair to have a chat. The trout, he says, bite best a week after St. Johann's tid (June 21), that being, no doubt, the time when the first flies appear.

Among other things, he tells me that about four miles to the west of this, in a mountain valley called Skomedal, there are the remains of an ancient church, at a spot named Morstöl, *i.e.*, the chalêt on the moors. Underneath it is a sort of crypt. The graves, too, are plain to see. According to the country side tradition, which is no doubt true (for there never was such a country as this for preserving traditions, as well as customs, unimpaired), all the church-goers were exterminated by the black death in the middle of the fourteenth century. The people have not dared, says the man, to build any fixed habitation there since, and the place is only used as a summer pasture. More courage has been shown elsewhère, as the following story will show; but perhaps the real reason is, that in this

valley it would not pay to build a gaard, the site being very elevated and cold.

Where the great Gaard (Garth) of Mustad now stands, there used, once on a time, to be a farmstead called Framstad, the finest property in all Vardal. But when "the great manqueller" visited these parts, all the inhabitants of the valley, those of Framstad among the number, were swept away, and a century later it was only known in tradition that the westernmost part of the valley had ever been inhabited. One day a hunter lost himself in the interminable forest which covered the district. In vain he looked for any symptom of human dwellings. After wandering about for a length of time in a state of hopeless bewilderment, he suddenly descried what looked like a house through the trees, which were of immense age. All around was so dreary and deserted that it was not without a secret shudder he ventured into the building. A strange sight met his eyes as he entered. On the hearth was a kettle, half consumed by rust, and some pieces of charcoal. On one of the heavy benches which surrounded the fireplace lay a distaff, and

some balls of rotten thread, with other traces of female industry. Against the wall hung a cross-bow, and some other weapons; but everything was covered with the dust of centuries. Surely there must be some more vestiges of the former occupants, thought he, as he clambered up into the loft by the steep ladder. And sure enough there were two great bedsteads, the solid timbers of which were let into the end walls of the room. In each of these were the mouldering skeletons of two or more human beings.

Over these a number of mice were running, who, frightened at his approach, hurried off in all directions.

He now remembered the tradition of the black death. This must have been the dwelling of some of the victims, left just in the state it was when the hand of the Destroyer was suddenly laid upon them. Being a shrewd fellow, he at once perceived the value of his discovery, and with his axe marked his name and the day of the month on the wall of the building. As the day was far spent, he kept watch and ward in the weird

abode, and next day started eastward, where he knew his home must lie, taking care to blaze the trees on his road, as a clue to the spot. He managed to get home safely, and before long returning to the place with others, he soon cleared the forest, and brought the old enclosures into cultivation. In memory of his discovery he called his new abode Mustad (Mouse Grange), the very name by which it still goes; nay, his descendants are said to be its present occupiers. In the eastern and western walls of the garret the mortice holes of the old bed-timbers are still visible. The date is also distinguishable on one of the outside fir-timbers, which are so intensely hard as almost to defy the stroke of an axe.

A little higher up the main valley along which I am travelling, and a little to the east of it, there is another, called Findal, which is the scene of the following curious legend. The plague only spared two persons in this sequestered spot, a man and his wife, Knut and Thore by name. They were frightfully lonely, but still years rolled on, and they never thought of quitting their ancient habitation. The only thing that plagued them was,

how to count time, and at last they lost their reckoning, and did not feel certain when the great winter festival of Yule came round. It was agreed, therefore, when the winter was at hand, and the days rapidly shortening, that the old lady should start off on foot, and go straight forward until she found people to tell her the day of the month. She went some distance, but the snow was so deep that her knees got quite tired, and she sat down on the Fond (snow-field), when suddenly, to her astonishment, she heard the following words sung in a clear quaint tone, by a voice under the snow.

Deka deka Thole,
Bake du brouv te Jole:
Note ei,
Aa Dagana tvaei,
So laenge ae de ti Jole.

You there, my good Thole,
Bake you bread for Jule:
Nights one,
And days two,
So long it is to Jule.

The old lady hurried back at once to her John Anderson, and they kept the festival on the day signified, which they felt sure was the right one, as it afterwards turned out to be.

Bishop Ullathorne and the other miracle-mongers will, no doubt, fasten upon this legend as one to be embodied in their next catalogue of supernatural interventions in support of the Romish faith, alongside of "Our Lady of Sallette," and other pretty stories. One might as well religiously believe in those charming inventions of Ovid, to which the imagination clings with such fondness, so thoroughly are they intertwined with human sympathies.

But let us get nearer our own time. Four years ago, I hear, the people of the valley were terrified by the apparition of a Scotchman, who had taken it into his head to walk through Norway in full Highland costume, armed with a hanger and a pair of pistols. A man who saw him close to this took him for the foul fiend, and made off into the wood. Others, who were less alarmed, considered him to be mad (gal). After a good deal of difficulty he brought the folks to a parley, and not knowing a word of Norsk, but being thirsty, he asked for grog. The sailors on board the *Reine Hortense* might have understood these four letters, when signalled in Arctic waters by the aristocratic

owner of *The Foam*. Not so the Saetersdal people. They thought he said "gröd," and brought him a lump of porridge. He then asked for "water," when they brought him a pair of large worsted gloves (vanter), here pronounced vorter. This reminds me of a friend of mine who arrived at a station-house in a great state of hunger. He could speak enough of the language to inquire for provisions. "Porridge," was the reply. "Anything else?" "Beeren?" "Yes, by all means," exclaimed he, revelling in imagination on bear-collops. The dame presently entered with a dish of beeren, which consisted of—wild strawberries!—a nice dessert, but not fitted for a *pièce de résistance*.

Perhaps the reader will not object to be introduced to some of the folks here nominally. Many of the grand old names current in Saetersdal don't exist elsewhere in Norway, but are to be found in the Sagas; and this is another proof of the tenacity with which this part of the country adheres to everything belonging to its forefathers. Instead of such names as Jacob or Peder, we have Bjorgulv, Torgrim, Torkil, Tallak, Gunstein,

Herjus, Tjöstolf, Tarjei, Osuf, Aamund, Aanund, Grunde; while the women answer to such Christian names as Durdei, Gjellaug, Svalaug, Aslaug (feminine of Aslack), Asbjorg (feminine of Asbjörn), Sigrid (feminine of Sigur), and Gunvor. The dog, even, who comes up into the loft, and seems anxious to make my acquaintance, is called Storm.

As the next morning is rainy, I look about the premises for anything noteworthy. In one corner is a bundle of thin strips of bark. These are taken from the branches of the linden-tree, and steeped in water from spring to autumn. They are then separated into shreds, and woven by the peasants into ropes, which are not so durable, however, as those of hemp. A bunch of carraway shrub is hanging up to dry. It grows all about here. The seeds are mixed with all kinds of food.

"Friske smag har det," remarks the old lady. "It has a fresh taste with it."

Outside the house there are two or three lysters, and some split pine-roots for "burning the water." In the dark, still nights of autumn, the trout and

bleke which approach the shore are speared by the men.

In the passage is suspended a notice to the effect that instruction in agriculture is offered by the Government gratis, at a school down the valley, to all young men who bring a certificate of baptism, vaccination, and also a testimonial of good moral conduct from the clergyman.

While I am reading this notice, a desolate-looking young female, with dishevelled black hair, comes staring at me through the open door, with a most wobegone aspect. Her husband, I find, is a drinker of brantviin. On one occasion he went down to Christiansand, drank tremendously, and returned quite rabid. For some time he was chained leg to leg. He is better now, but beats the unfortunate creature, his wife, who does not complain. I recommended the people, the next time he did it, to chain him again, and pay the bully back in some of his own coin—hard knocks.

Hearing so much of the trouts of the Högvand, *i.e.*, High-water (the people here call it Högvatn, re-

minding me of the Crummack-*waters*, and Derwent-waters, of the North of England), I take Tallak, one of the sons, across the lake. On the further shore stood a man, with his young wife and child. They had a small boat, but it could not have lived in the swell now on the loch; so they borrowed ours for the transit. Threading our way through some birch scrub, we emerge upon the old smelting-house, where the copper-ore brought from the Valle copper-mine used to be prepared. But it is now at a standstill, and the beck close by rushes down with useless and unemployed energy. This stream comes down from the lake to which we are going.

On the way we pass a small shanty, of about eight feet square. I peep in through the open door. On the floor sits a young woman, with her three children. Their sleeping berths are just overhead, let into the wall. After a stiff ascent, we reach the High-water. Launched on the lake, I expected great things, as the rain, which still poured when we started, had ceased, and a fine ripple curled the waters, which glistened smilingly as they caught

sight of the sun's cheerful countenance emerging from behind the heavy clouds. But my hopes were doomed to disappointment. Tallak said it was torden-veir (thunder-weather), and unpropitious. Nevertheless, a banging fish took one of my flies, but carried the whole tackle away.

I then tried the triangles, and a four-pounder, at least, golden and plump, dashed at me, but by a clever plunge out of his own element, he managed to get clear again. After this I had not another chance; but I have no doubt, that if I had given a day to the lake, instead of an hour or two, I should have succeeded in developing its capabilities. The boat, or pram as it is called in these parts, is flat-bottomed and oblong. The rowing appliances are very peculiar. Two narrow boards, about three feet apart, were placed about midships, at right angles to the boat's length, and extending over the gunwale about a foot; two more similar pieces of wood were laid parallel to each other over the ends of the first two pieces, to which they were tied by birchen thongs, so as to form a square framework lying on the boat's gunwale. Two thole-pins were stuck into

each of the side pieces. Here, then, in the mountains of Thelemarken, we find the original outrigger, centuries old, the predecessor of the Claspers' invention, now so commonly used in England. On one of the cross-boards I sat, on the other the rower, thus keeping the frame firm by our own weight, it being secured to the body of the boat by birch-ties only. There was not a particle of iron about the whole affair; it was the simplest contrivance for crossing water I ever saw.

On our walk homeward Tallak tells me that he has seen the cat-lynx down in the valley, but that they generally keep up among the broken rocks (Urden). The wind was now so high that the passage of the Fjord was somewhat difficult. At times, I hear, it is so lashed by sudden tempests from the storm-engendering mountains, that the water leaves its bed, and fills the air with spray and foam.

Old Mr. Skomedal, who schusses me up this evening to Langeid, is a rich man in his way, owning three farms, not to mention a quantity of "arvegods" (heirlooms) on his wife's

side, in the shape of halberds, helmets, swords, apostle-spoons, and "oldtids aeld-gammle sager" (ancient curiosities).

He asked if I knew a cure for his gicht (rheumatism). Many years ago he was at a bryllup (wedding), when he got fuul (Scoticè fou= drunk); indeed everybody was fuul. But unfortunately he got wet outside as well as in, and fell asleep in his wet clothes, since when he has been troubled with aching pains.

The bears have killed two of his horses. The one he is driving he bought out of a drove from the Hardanger. It is only two years old, and shies alarmingly in the dusk* at some huge stones which have been placed by the roadside at intervals, battlement fashion, to keep travellers from going over the precipice, though the embrasures are like an act of parliament, and would admit of a coach and four being driven between them. "I thought it was a bear," said Skomedal, as he made out the stones.

* Dusk, in Norsk, "Tus-mörk:" that being the hour when the Tus, or Thus (sprite), loves to be abroad.

Becoming quite conversational and familiar, he offers me a pinch of snuff (snuus), whence the Scotch, "sneeshing." It was excellent "high dried," and, to my astonishment, of home manufacture, he buying the tobacco-leaf and the necessary flavouring fluid at the town. The rain having been very heavy, the valley is alive with falling waters. We pass a splendid fall close by the road, the white rage of which gleamed distinctly through the darkness, rendering that part of the road lighter than the rest. Imagine the way being lighted with cascades. Who would care for a row of gas-lamps under such circumstances ?

This fall, Skomedal tells me, was once drawn by a Frenchman; but I doubt much one of that nation ever venturing into these parts. "Well, Skomedal, can't you tell me some tales about the trolls?" said I, thinking the hour and the scene were admirably adapted for that sort of amusement.

"Let me see, ah! yes. There was a woman up at my stöl in Skomedal—that's where the tomt (site) of the old church is to be seen. She was

all alone one Thorsdags qveld (Thursday evening), her companion having come down to the gaard for mad (food). Looking out she sees what she supposes is Sigrid coming back up the mountain with a great box of provisions. But when the figure gets alongside of an abrupt rock just below, it suddenly disappears. Gunvor knew then that it was a Thus."

"Nonsense," replied I.

"Oh! it's all very well to say nonsense, but why do the cattle always get shy and urolig (unruly), when they pass that spot. We never could make out before why this was, but it was plain now, they could tell by their instinct there was something uncanny close by."

"Very good; do you know another tale?" said I, our pace well admitting of this diversion, as it was very slow in the dark wood, into which our road had now entered.

"Yes, that same woman, Gunvor's husband, was the best fiddler in the valley. One day, when she was all alone, she heard near her a beautiful tune (vaene slot) played on a violin. She could see

nobody, though she looked all over. That must have been a Troll underground. She remembered the tune, and taught it her husband. It was called (the name has slipped my recollection.) Nothing so beautiful as that slot was ever heard in the valley.

"But he is dead now, and there is nobody who can play as he did."*

* Like the Daoineshi of the Scotch Highlands, the Neck of Scandinavia shines in a talent for music. Poor creatures! the peasantry may well fancy they are fallen angels, who hope some day for forgiveness; for was not one heard, near Hornbogabro, in West Gotland, singing, to a sweet melody, "I know, and I know, and I know that my Redeemer liveth?" And did not a Neck, when some boys once said to him "What good is it for you to be sitting here and playing, for you will never enjoy eternal happiness," begin to weep bitterly?

CHAPTER IX

Langeid—Up the mountain—Vanity of vanity—Forest perfumes—The glad thrill of adventure—An ancient beacon—Rough fellows—Daring pine-trees—Quaint old powder-horn—Curiosities for sale—Sketch of a group of giants—Information for *Le Follet*—Rather cool—Rural dainties and delights—The great miracle—An odd name—The wedding garment—Ivar Aasen—The Study of Words—Philological lucubrations—A slagsmal—Nice subject for a spasmodic poet—Smoking rooms—The lady of the house—A Simon Svipu—A professional story-teller—Always about Yule-tide—The supernatural turns out to be very natural—What happened to an old woman—Killing the whirlwind—Hearing is believing—Mr. Parsonage corroborates Mr. Salomon—The grey horse at Roysland—There can be no doubt about it—Theological argument between a fairy and a clergyman—Adam's first wife, Lileth.

At Langeid station, where we arrived late at night, there was great difficulty in finding anybody at home. At last we ferreted out an old man in one of the multifarious buildings, which, as usual, formed the establishment. All the rest of the

family are paa hoien (up on the mountain). That Langeid was a horrid place. As there was no wash-basin to be found, I laid hands upon a quaint brass mortar, which the old man informed me was "manifold hundred years old." In the travellers' book I see a German has been informing the people that he is a Ph.D. But then I have seen elsewhere, in this country, an Englishman's name in the book with M.P. attached to it. But he went down, poor man, with the steamer *Ercolano*, so we must leave him alone.

What a lovely morning after the rain. The spines of the fir-trees, and the hairy lichen (*alectoria jubata*) festooning the branches, frosted over with the moisture which still adheres to them, and is not yet sucked up by the sun that is just rising over the high mountains. What refreshing odours they shed abroad, seconded by the lowlier "pors," with its delicious aromatic perfume.

What an intense pleasure it is thus to travel through an unknown country, not knowing where one is to be at the day's end, and looking at the map to find out where in the world one is. Give

me this rather than a journey in Switzerland, and all the first-rate hotels in the world.

"Up yonder," said my attendant, "a bear used to harbour. The man in the gaard above shot him not long ago. He was very large. That's a 'Vitr' (warning) yonder, on the top of that mountain to the east. There are a great many dozen of pine-logs piled up there from the olden times."

I discovered that this was a beacon-hill, formerly used to give notice of the approach of foes on the coast. The next beacon was at Lobdal, a great many miles down the valley. The establishment of beacons from Naes to Helgeland, is attributed, by Snorro, to Hacon the Good. A slower way of conveying intelligence of the descent of an enemy on the coast, was the split arrow (haeror), equivalent to the fiery cross of Scotland.

"Are not you frightened to travel all alone?" said the little fellow, looking curiously into my face. "You might be injured."

"Not I," replied I.

"Oh! yes, we Norwegians are good people, ex-

cept in Hallingdal—they are rare rough fellows there, terrible fighters."

To the left of the road, high on the hill, is the abode of Herjus, the bear-victim mentioned above, who is gradually recovering from his wounds.

The scenery becomes grander as we advance. What would you think of trees growing on the side of a precipice, apparently as steep as Flamboro' Head, and ten times as high? They seem determined to get into places where the axe cannot reach them. But they are not safe for all that. Now and then the mountain side will crack, and some of it comes down. Look at that vast stone, which would throw all your Borrowdale boulder stones into the shade; it has come down in this manner. Advantage has been taken of its overhanging top to stow away under it a lot of agricultural instruments, among which I see a primitive harrow of wood.

At Ryssestad station I find a quaint old powder-horn, more than two hundred years old, on which Daniel in the lion's den, Roland, Adam and Eve, Samson and Delilah, figure in marvellous guise.

I note this, as I afterwards saw almost the facsimile of it in the Bergen Museum. The owners declined to part with it.

There was also a wolf's skin, price five dollars. The station-master shot him from one of the windows last winter, while prowling about the premises. One Sigur Sannes offers for sale a curious old "hand-axe," date 1622, but I did not wish to add to my luggage.

What a set of giants surrounded me while I was drinking coffee! and such names — Bjug, Salvi, Jermund, Gundar! Imagine all these long-legged fellows standing in trousers reaching to their very shoulders and neck, and supported by shoulder-straps decked in brass ornaments, while below they are secured by nine buttons above the ankle. What may be seen of their shirts is confined by two immense silver bullet studs, and then a silver brooch an inch and a half wide. The hats, of felt, are made in the valley. The brim is very small, and the crown narrows half way up, and then swells out again. A silver chain is passed round it two or three times, and confined in front

by a broad silver clasp, to which is suspended a cross. A figured velvet band likewise goes twice round it.

The dress of the women is the black or white skirt, already mentioned, swelling into enormous folds behind, and so short as to permit the garters with silver clasps to be seen. The stockings bulge out immensely at the calf—indeed, are much fuller than is necessary—giving the legs a most plethoric appearance, and, as in the Tyrol, they often only reach to the ankle. Occasionally, when the women wish to look very smart, a pair of white socks are drawn over the foot, which oddly contrasts with the black stocking. The shoes, which are home-made, are pointed, and fit remarkably well. On the bosom is a saucer-sized brooch of silver, besides bullet-studs at the collar and wristband. I see also women carrying their babies in the kjell or plaid.

Beyond the station, we have to diverge from the regular road, and take an improvised one, the bridge having been carried away by a flom (freshet). At a ferry above, where the river opens into a lake, the ferrywoman, after presenting to me her mull

of home-made snuff, inquires if I am married. This provokes a similar query from me.

"No," is the reply; "but I have a grown-up son."

The custom of Nattefrieri, to which I have alluded elsewhere, will account for things of this kind.

Beyond the ferry there has been a recent fall of rocks from the cliffs above. In the cool recesses of the rocks grow numbers of strawberries and raspberries, which my man obligingly gathers and presents to me. A black and white woodpecker, with red head and rump, perches on a pine-tree close by.

A little above is the finest fall on the river, except that near Vigeland. All around the smooth scarped cliffs converge down to the water at a considerable angle, the cleavage being parallel to their surface.

At one spot my chatty little post-boy, who, boy as he was, rejoiced in a wife and child, stops to talk with a mighty tall fellow, one Björn Tvester, who offers to take me up some high mountain near to see a fine view. A woman close

by, who is unfortunately absent on the hills, possesses an ancient silver cross, of great size and fine workmanship. This used, in former times, to be used by the bridegroom at a wedding.

A smiling plain now opens before us, in the centre of which stands the parish church. While I stop to enjoy the prospect, a crowd of men and women collect around me. One of the fair sex, who rejoiced in the name of Mari Björnsdatter, I endeavour to sketch, to her great delight.

"Stor mirakel!" (great miracle) shouted the peasants, looking over my shoulder. "Aldrig seet maken* (never saw the like)"!

"And what's your name?" I asked of a red-headed urchin, of miserable appearance. The answer, "Thor," made me smile, and produced a roar from the masculines, Folke, Orm, Od (a very odd name, indeed), Dreng, Sigbjörn, and a titter from the feminines ditto, all of whom saw the joke at once.

Putting up at the station-master's at Rige, I sally out and meet with an intelligent fellow, Arne Bjugson by name, formerly a schoolmaster,

* In Border-ballad language, "maik."

now a pedlar. He tells me there is an ancient bridal dress at one of the houses, and he it was who put this on, and sat to Tidemann for his sketch of the Saetersdal Bridegroom.

We forthwith go to inspect it. The bridegroom's jacket is of blue, over which came another of red. His knee-breeches are black, and crimped or plaited; his blue stockings were wound round with ribands; his hat was swathed in a white cloth, round which a silver chain was twisted. In his hand he held a naked sword; around his waist was a brass belt, and on his neck a silver chain with medals. The bride's dress consisted of two black woollen petticoats, plaited or folded; above these a blue one, and over all a red one. Then came a black apron, and above that a white linen one, and round her waist three silver belts. Her jacket was black, with a small red collar, ornamented with a profusion of buckles, hooks, fibulas, and chains. On her head was a silver-gilt crown, and around her neck a pearl necklace, to which a medal, called "Agnus Dei," was suspended.

Arne has read *Snorro's Chronicle*, which he bor-

rowed from the parson. Ivar Aasen, the author of several works on the old Norsk language, has been more than once up here examining into the dialect. Those interested in the sources of the English language, and in ascertaining how much of it is due to the old Norsk, have ample room for amusement and instruction here. Many English words, unknown in the modern Norwegian, are to be found in use in these secluded parts, though driven from the rest of the country, just in the same way as the Norsk language was talked at Bayeux a long time after it had become obsolete at Rouen and other parts of Normandy. Our "noon" reappears in "noni;" "game," in "gama," a word not known away from this. "To prate," is "prata;" "to die," is "doi;" "two," is "twi," not "to," as elsewhere; indeed, all the numerals differ from those used elsewhere. The people pronounce "way," "plough," and "net," just like an Englishman. To "neigh," is "neja," not "vrinska." A stocking is "sock," not "strömpe;" eg = edge; skafe = safe or cupboard; "kvik" corresponds in all its meanings to our

word "quick." The old Icelandic "gildr" is used as an eulogistic epithet, = excellent. Their word for "wheel" sounds like our English, and is not "eule," as elsewhere; "stubbe" is our "stub," or little bit; "I" is "oi," not "Ieg;" "fir" is pronounced "fir;" "spon" has been already mentioned: "snow," "mile," "cross," re-occur here, whereas elsewhere they differ from the English.

While we are engaged in these philological lucubrations a man comes up, a piece of whose lower lip has gone, interfering with his speech. This occurred at a wedding. He and another had a trial of strength, in which he proved the strongest. The vanquished man, assisted by his two brothers, then set upon him, and bit him like a dog. As aforesaid, the people of the valley are ordinarily good-natured and peaceable enough; but let them only get at the ale or brandy, and they become horribly brutal and ferocious, and a slagsmal (fight) is sure to ensue. One method of attack on these occasions is by gouging the eye out, spone i ovgo (literally to spoon out the eye). Sometimes the combatants place some hard sub-

stance in the hand, as a stone or piece of wood. This they call "a hand-devil," the "knuckle-duster" of English ruffians. At Omlid, several miles over the mountains to the east of this, the people even when sober are said to be anything but snil (good). So disastrous was the effect of drink at a bridal (*i.e.*, bride-ale or wedding festival),* that the bride, it is said, frequently used to bring with her a funeral shirt for fear that she might have to carry home her husband dead. In any case she was provided with bandages wherewith to dress his wounds.

I picked up another very intelligent Cicerone in Mr. Sunsdal, the Lehnsman of the district.

"You would, perhaps, like to see one of the old original dwellings of our forefathers," said he; "there are still many of them in this part of Norway. The name is Rogstue, *i. e.*, smoke-room."

We accordingly entered one of these pristine

* So, in old English, "Church-ale" was the festival on the anniversary of the consecration of a church: while "grave-ale" was the "wake" at an interment.

abodes, such as were the fashion among the highest of the land many hundred years ago. The house was built of great logs, and its chief and almost only sitting-room had no windows, the light being admitted from above by an orifice (ljaaren) in the centre of the roof, over which fitted a lid fastened to a pole. Through this the smoke escaped from the great square fireplace (aaren) in the middle of the floor, enclosed by hewn stones. Round this ran heavy benches, the backs of which were carved with various devices. A huge wooden crane, rudely carved into the figure of a head, and blackened with smoke, projected from a side wall to a point half-way between the hearth and chimney-hole. From this the great porridge-pot (Gryd-hodden) was suspended. Kettle is "hodden" in old English.

On this smoke-blackened crane I discerned two or three deep scars, indicative of a custom now obsolete. On the occasion of a wedding, the bridegroom used to strike his axe into this as he entered, which was as much as to say that peace should be the order of the day; an omen, be it said, which seldom came true in practice.

One side of this pristine apartment was taken up by the two beds (kvillunne) fixed against the wall, according to the custom of the country, and in shape resembling the berths on board ship. Between them was the safe or cupboard (skape). On the opposite side of the wall was a wooden dresser of massive workmanship, while round the room were shelves with cheeses upon them. They were placed just within the smoke line, as I shall call it. The smoke, in fact, not having draught enough, descends about half-way down the walls, rendering that portion of them which came within the lowest smoke-mark of the sooty vapour as black as the fifty wives of the King of the Cannibal Islands; while the great beams below this preserved their original wood colour.

The lady of the house, Sigrid Halvorsdatter, took a particular pride in showing the interior of her abode. Good-nature was written on her physiognomy, and the writing was not counterfeit. When we arrived, she was just on the point of going up the mountain with a light wooden-frame (meiss) on her shoulders, on which was bound a

heavy milk-pail; but she immediately deposited her burden on a great stone at the door, took a piece of wood from under the eaves and unfastened the door. Subsequently, I find that this is the identical dame, and Rogstue, painted by Tidemann, and published among his illustrations of Norwegian customs.

Taking leave of her with many thanks, we proceeded to another house, where the woman said we should see a "Simon Svipu."

"A Simon Svipu!" ejaculates the reader, "what on earth is that?" Thereby hangs a tale, or a tail, if you will. The nightmare plagued these people before she visited England.

The people of this valley call her "Muro," and they have the following effectual remedy against her. They first take a knife, wrap it up in a kerchief, and pass it three times round the body; a pair of scissors are also called into requisition, and, lastly, a "Simon Svipu," which is the clump or excrescence found on the branches of the birch-tree, and out of which grow a number of small twigs. This last is hung up in the

stable over the horses' heads, or fixed in one of the rafters, and also over their own bed.

This exorcism is then pronounced—

Muro, Muro, cursed jade,
If you're in, then you must out;
Here are Simon Svipu, scissors, blade,
Will put you to the right about.

The birchen charm may remind one of the slips of yew "shivered in the moon's eclipse," in *Macbeth*.

The term "svipu" is used in parts of the country for whip, instead of the real word "svöbe." And I have no doubt this is the signification of it here—viz., a means of driving away the mare.*

But to return to the real Simon Pure—I mean Svipu. Unfortunately, I could not get a sight of

* I must not quit the subject without mentioning the Danish remedy. In Holberg's facetious poem, *Peder Paars*, we read:—

For the nightmare a charm I had,
From the parson of our town—
Set your shoes with the heels to the bed,
Each night when you lie down.

it. The good folks either could not, or would not, find the wonderful instrument. I believe, though still in their heart clinging to the ancient superstition, they were averse to confessing it to others.

"But here comes a man," said the Lehnsman, "who will tell us some curious anecdotes; his name is Solomon Larsen Haugebirke. He is a silversmith and blacksmith by trade, and having been servant to half-a-dozen priests here, he has become waked up, and having a tenacious memory, he can throw a good deal of light on the ancient customs of the valley. Gesegnet arbeid (blessed labour) to you, Solomon."

"Good day, Mr. Lehnsman. You have got a stranger with you, I see. Is he a Tüsker (German)?"

The old gentleman was soon down on the grass, under the shadow of an outbuilding, the sun being intensely hot, and whiffing his pipe, stopped with my tobacco, while he folded his hands in deep thought.

"Well, really, Lehnsman, I can't mind any-

thing just on the moment. Landstad and Bugge* were both here, and got all my stories and songs."

"But can't you remember something about Aasgardsreia?"

After pausing for a minute or two, Solomon said—

"Well, sir, you know it was always about Yuletide, when we were just laid down in bed, that they came by. They never halted till they came to a house where something was going to happen. They used to stop at the door, and dash their saddles against the wall or roof, making the whole house shake, and the great iron pot rattle again."

"But do you really believe in it, Solomon?" said I, putting some more tobacco in his pipe.

* Landstad is a Norwegian clergyman, who has lately edited a collection of Norsk minstrelsy, gathered from the mouths of the people. Bugge is a student, who is travelling about the remote valleys, at the expense of the Government, to collect all the metrical tales and traditions that still linger there. It is very unfortunate that this was not done earlier. The last few years have made great inroads on these reminiscences of days gone by.

"When I was a lad I did, but now I don't think I do. Still there was something very strange about it, wasn't there, sir? The horses in the stable used to be all of a sweat, as if they heard the noise, and were frightened. *They* could not have fancied it, whatever *we* did."

"But are you certain they did sweat?"

"I believe you; I've gone into the stable, and found them as wet as if they had been dragged through the river."*

"Ah! but I can easily explain that," said the Lehnsman. "When I first came here, some years ago, the young men were a very lawless lot; they thought nothing of taking the neighbours' horses at night, and riding them about the country, visiting the jenter (girls); and it is my firm belief that they took advantage of the old superstition about the Aasgaardsreia coming by, and making the horses sweat, to carry on their own frolic with impunity. It was they that made the horses sweat,

* A Manx gentleman assured Waldren that he had lost three or four hunters by these nocturnal excursions, as the fairies would not condescend to ride Manx ponies. In Norway, however, they have no choice.

by bringing them back all of a heat, and not these sprites that you talk of."

I felt inclined to take the Lehnsman's view of the case; but the old man shook his head doubtingly.

"Ride, sir! why, at the time I speak of, you could not possibly ride, the snow was so deep that the roads were impassable. But now we are talking about it, it strikes me there may have been another cause. The horses used to get so much extra food just then, in honour of Yule, and the stalls are so small and close, that perhaps it made them break out in a sweat. Be that as it may, we used all to be terribly frightened when we heard the Aasgaardsreia."

"It was merely the rush of the night wind," said I, "beating against the house sides."

"Would the night wind carry people clean away?" rejoined Solomon, returning to the charge. "Once, when they came riding by, there was a woman living at that gaard yonder, who fell into a besvömmelse (swoon); and in that state she was carried along with them right away to Tof-

telien, five old miles to the eastward.* And more by token, though she had never been there before, she gave a most accurate description of the place. I was by, and heard her. What do you think of that, Herr Lehnsman?" concluded Solomon, who was evidently halting between two antagonistic feelings, his superior enlightenment and his old deep-rooted boyish superstitions.

* "Upon a time, when he (Lord Duffus) was walking abroad in the fields, near his own house, he was suddenly carried away, and found next day at Paris, in the French king's cellar, with a silver cup in his hand. Being brought into the king's presence, and questioned who he was, and how he came thither, he told his name, country, and place of residence; and that, on such a day of the month (which proved to be the day immediately preceding), being in the fields, he heard a noise of a whirlwind, and of voices crying, 'Horse and Hattock!' (this is the word the fairies are said to use when they remove from any place); whereupon he cried, 'Horse and Hattock' also, and was immediately caught up, and transported through the air by the fairies to that place; where, after he had drank heartily, he fell asleep; and, before he awakened, the rest of the company were gone."—*Letter from Scotland to Aubrey, quoted by W. Scott.* I could not learn what the *mot* of the fairy pack is in Saetersdal, or that there was any at all. Still the Norsk superstition is clearly the parent of the Scotch one.

"I don't believe it at all," was the incredulous functionary's reply; "it was, no doubt, the power of imagination, and the woman had heard from somebody, though she might have forgotten it, what Toftelien looked like."

"You talked about the night-wind," continued Solomon, turning to me. "I remember well when I was a lad, if there was a virvel-vind (whirlwind), I used to throw my toll-knife right into it. We all believed that it was the sprites that caused it, and that we should break the charm in that way."

"Of course you believed in the underground people generally?"

"Well, yes, we did. I know a man up yonder, at Bykle, who, whenever he went up to the Stöl, used, directly he got there, and had opened the door, to kneel down, and pray them not to disturb him for four weeks; and afterwards they might come to the place, and welcome, till the next summer."

"But did you ever see any of these people?" said I, resolved on probing Solomon with a home question.

"No, I've never *seen* them, but I have heard them, as sure as I sit on this stone."

"Indeed, and how was that?"

"Well, you must know, I was up in the Fjeld to the eastward at a fiskevatn (lake with fish in). Suddenly I heard a noise close by me, just behind some rocks, and I thought it was other folks come up to fish. They were talking very loudly and merrily; so I called out to let them know I was there, as I wished to have selskab (company). Directly I called, it was all still. This puzzled me; so I went round the rocks, but not a creature could I see, so I returned to my fishing. Presently the noise began again, and I distinctly heard folks talking."

"And what sort of talk was it?"

"Oh! baade fiint o gruft (both fine and coarse, *i.e.*, good and bad words), accuratè som paa en bryllup (just like at a wedding). I called out again, on which the noise suddenly stopped. Presently they began afresh, and I could make out it was folks dancing. Then I felt convinced that it must be a thuss*-bryllup (elf-wedding)."

* The word is written with or without h.

"Had you slept well the night before?"

"Never better."

"You had been drinking, then?"

"Langt ifra (far from it); I was as ædru (sober) and clear-headed as a man could be who had taken nothing but coffee and milk for weeks."

"And how long did this noise continue?"

"Two hours at least. Every time I cried out, they stopped, and after a space began again. I examined all around very carefully, as I was not a bit afraid; but I could see no hole or anything, nothing but bare rocks. Now what could it be?" asked the old man, solemnly.

There are more things in heaven and earth, thought I, than we dream of.

"Besides," continued Solomon, "there was another man I afterwards found fishing at another part of the water, who heard the same noise."

"Who was that?" said the Lehnsman.

"Olsen Prestergaard," (*i.e.*, Olsen Parsonage, so called because he was born on the parsonage farm).

"But he is as deaf as a post," retorted the other.

"He is *now*, but he was not then. He has been deaf only since he got that cold five years ago; and this that I am talking of happened six, come Martinsmass."

It may be as well to state that we met Mr. Parsonage subsequently making hay, and, after a vast deal of hammering, he was made to understand us, when with a most earnest expression of countenance he confirmed Solomon's account exactly.

"Can't you tell us some more of your tales?" said the Lehnsman; "one of those will do you told to Landstad and Moe, or to Bugge last summer."

"How long does the stranger stop?" asked Solomon; "I will endeavour to recollect one or two."

"Oh! I shall be off to-morrow," said I.

"Why so early? Well, let me see. There was the grey fole (horse) at Roysland. I'll tell you about that. You must know, then, sir, we used many years ago to have a horse-race (skei) on the flat, just beyond the church yonder, at the end of August-month each year. There was a man living

up at Roysland, an old mile from here, up on the north side of the Elv. He was a strange sort of a fellow, nobody could make him out; Laiv Roysland, they called him. One August, on the morning of the race, a grey horse came down to his gaard and neighed. He went and put the halter on him, and seeing he was a likely sort of a nag, thought he would take him down and run him, without asking anybody any questions. And sure enough he came. The horse—he was a stallion—beat all the rest easily. Laiv carried off all the prizes and returned home. When he got there he let the horse loose, and it immediately took up to the hills, and was not heard of or seen for twelve months. When the race-day came round, a neigh was heard (han nejade), Laiv went out of the door, and found the same horse. He put the halter on his head, and brought him down to the races just as before. He won everything. There never was the likes of him whether in biting or running (bitast eller springast). He was always the best. At last people began to talk and said it must be the fand sjel (the fiend himself). The third

year the horse ran it lost. What a rage Laiv was in. When he got home he hit the horse a tremendous thwack with his whip, and cursed a loud oath. It struck out, and killed him on the spot. Next year a neigh was heard as usual outside the house, early on the morning of the race-day, but nobody dared go out. They were not such dare-devils as Laiv. It neighed a second time, but the people would not venture, and from that time to this it has never been heard of or seen."

"A strange wild tale," said I; "what do you really think it was?"

"Well, I suppose it was *He*. I never told that story," continued Solomon, "to any one before."

"Yes, there can be no doubt about it," said Solomon, after a long pause; "so many people have seen these underground people that there must be some truth in it. Besides which, is not there something about it in Holy Writ: 'Every knee shall bow, both of things that are in heaven, and in earth, and under the earth,' and who can be under the earth but the underground people?"

"Well, Solomon, have you no more tales?"

"Not of the valley here, but I can tell you one of the country up north."

"Oh, yes, that will do."

"Well, you must know, there was a man at a gaard up there—let me see, I can't rightly mind the name of it. He was good friends with a Tuss; used, in fact, to worship him (dyrkes). The priest got to hear of this, and warned him that it was wrong. The man made no secret of the fact, but persisted that there was no harm in it. Indeed, he derived a mint of good from the acquaintance. His crops were a vast deal finer, and he really could not give up his friend on any consideration.* The man spoke with such apparent earnestness and conviction, that the priest was seized with a desire to see the Tuss. 'That you shall, and welcome,' said the man; 'I don't anticipate any difficulty. I've lent him two rolls of chew-tobacco, and he will be

* "Some of the Highland seers, even in our day, have boasted of their intimacy with elves as an innocent and advantageous connexion."—Walter Scott, *Border Minstrelsy*.

sure to return them before long. No Christian can be more punctual than he is in matters of business.' The little gentleman put in an appearance soon after, and honestly repaid the tobacco, with thanks for the loan of it (tak for laane). 'Bide a bit, my friend,' said the farmer, 'our parson wants to have a snak (chat) with you.' 'Impossible,' he replied; 'I've no time; but I've a brother that's a parson. He's just the man; besides, he has more time than me. I'll send him.' The tuss-priest accordingly came, and had a long dispute with the priest of this world about various passages in the Bible. The latter was but a poor scholar, so he was easily out-argued.

"At last they began to dispute about vor Frelser (our Redeemer).

"'Frelser!' exclaimed the goblin-priest, 'I want no Frelser.'

"'How so?'

"'I'm descended from Adam's first wife. When she brought forth the child from which our people trace their descent, Adam had not sinned.'

"'First wife?' repeated the University man;

'where do you find anything about first wife in the five books of Moses? If you have found any such like thing there, you have not read it right, said he.

"'Don't you remember,' said the tuss, 'the Bible has it, "This is *now* bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh." So he must have been married before to somebody of a different nature.'

"The other, who was not so well read in the Bible as he ought to be—so much of his time was taken up in farming and such like unaandelig (unspiritual) occupations—was not able to confute this argument. Indeed, the tuss-priest beat the Lutheran priest hollow in every argument, till at last they parted, and the latter was never known again to express a wish to have any further controversy with so subtle an antagonist."

CHAPTER X.

Scandinavian origin of Old English and Border ballads—Nursery rhymes—A sensible reason for saying "No"—Parish books—Osmund's new boots—A St. Dunstan story—The short and simple annals of a Norwegian pastor—Peasant talk—Riddles—Traditional melodies—A story for William Allingham's muse—The Tuss people receive notice to quit—The copper horse—Heir-looms—Stories in wood-carving—Morals and match-making.

It is well known that some of the old English and Border ballads, *e.g.*, "King Henrie," "Kempion," "the Douglas Tragedy," the "Dæmon Lover," are, more or less Scandinavian in their origin. In the same way, "Jack the Giant Killer," and "Thomas Thumb," derive many of their features from the Northern Pantheon.

Mr. Halliwell, in his *Nursery Rhymes of England*, and *Popular Rhymes*, quotes some Swedish facsimiles of our rhymes of this class, and states,

further, on the authority of Mr. Stephens, that the English infants of the nineteenth century "have not deserted the rhymes chanted so many ages since by their mothers in the North."* It struck me, therefore, that in this store-house of antiquities, Saetersdal, I might be able to pick up some information corroborative of the above hypothesis. It was some time, however, before I could make Solomon understand what I meant by nursery rhymes. At last he hit upon my meaning, and I discovered that the word here for a lullaby or jingle, is "börne-süd." Elsewhere, it is called Tull, or Lull-börn, whence our Lullaby.

"What's the use of such things?" said Solomon; "they are pure nonsense."

But, on my entreaty, he and others recited a few, in a sort of simple chant. The reader acquainted with that species of literature in England will be able to trace some resemblance between it and the following specimens, which have been in vogue in

* Mr. Bellenden Kerr's theory of a political and much less ancient origin for these rhymes is surely more ingenious than correct.

this out-of-the-way valley several hundred years. The oldest people in it have inherited the same from their forefathers, and they are in the old dialect, which is, in a great measure, the old Norse. While what is very remarkable, like as is the case with us and our nursery rhymes, the people in many cases recited to me what appeared sheer nonsense, the meaning of which they were themselves unable to explain.

Börn lig i brondo,
Brondo sig i haando ;
Kasler i krogje,
Kiernet i kove,
Hesten mi i heller fast,
Jeita te mi i scaare fast,
Saa mi spil langst noro Heio.

Bairn it lies a burning,
Burning itself in the hands ;
Kettle is on the crook,
The churn is in a splutter,
My horse is fast on the rocks,
My goat is fast on the screes,
My sheep play along the northern heights.

Here is another, which would remind us of a passage in "The Midsummer Night's Dream," only

that the squirrel is now reaper instead of coach-maker:—

Ekorne staa paa vaadden o' slo
Höre dei kaar dei snöre;
Skjere laeste, kraaken dro,
O, roisekattan han kjore.

The squirrels they stand on the meadow and mow,
Hear how they bustle the vermin;
The magpie it loads, and who draws but the crow,
And the waggoner, it is the ermine.

A similar one:—

Reven sitte i lien,
Hore börne grin,
Kom börne mine, o gaer heim mi ma,
Saa skal wi gama sja.
Han traeske, hun maale,
Kiessling knudde, kjette bake,
Muse rödde mi rumpe si paa leiven.

The fox, the fox, she sits on the lea,
Hears her bairns a-crying:
Come, bairns mine, and go home with me,
What games you shall then be seeing.
The fox he thrashed, the vixen she ground;
The kitten kneads, the cat she bakes,
The mouse with his tail he sprinkles the cakes.*

* This alludes to the custom of sprinkling the girdle-cake with a brush during the baking.

Another:—

So ro ti krabbe skjar,
Kaar mange fiske har du der?
En o' ei fiörde,
Laxen den store;
En ti far, en ti mor,
En ti den som fisker dror.

Sow row to the crab-skerrys,*
How many fishes have you there?
One, two, three, four,
The salmon, the stour.
One for father, for mother one;
One for him the net who drew.

Now and then a different course of treatment is proposed for the fractious baby, as in the following:—

Bis, Bis, Beijo,
Börn will ikke teio,
Tak laeggen,
Slo mod vaeggen,
So vil börne teio.

Bis, Bis, Beijo,
Baby wont be still, O,
By the leg take it,
'Gainst the wall whack it,
So will baby hush, O.

* Like our "Rompty idity, row, row, row."

This reminds me of another:—

Klappe, Klappe, söde,
Büxerne skulle vi böte,
Böte de med kjetteskind,
Saa alle klorene vend te ind,
I rumpen paa min söde.

Clappa, Clappa, darlin',
Breeches they want patchin',
Patch them with a nice cat-skin,
All the claws turned outside in,
To tickle my little darlin'.

It being now noon (noni), or Solomon's meal-time, he left me, promising to give me a call in the evening.

"Yes, and you must take a glass of finkel with me; it will refresh your mind as well as body."

"Not a drop, thank you. If I begin, I can't stop."

"That's the way with these bonders," observed the Lehnsman to me, when we were alone; "even the most intelligent of them, if they once get hold of the liquor, go on drinking till they are furiously drunk."

This then is pre-eminently the country for Father Mathews!

"By-the-bye," said the Lehnsman, "our parson has left us, and his successor is not yet arrived; but I think I can get the keys from the clerk, and we will go to the vicarage, and look at the kald-bog (call-book), a sort of record of all the notable things that have ever happened at the kald (living)."

Presently we found ourselves seated in the priest's chamber, with the said book before us.

The following curious reminiscence of the second priest after the Reformation is interesting:—

"One Sunday, when the priest was just going up into the pulpit (praeke-stol), in strode the Lehnsman Wund (or ond=bad, violent), Osmund Berge. He had on a pair of new boots, which creaked a good deal, much to the scandal of the congregation, who looked upon this sort of foot-covering as an abomination; shoes being the only wear of the valley. The priest, who had a private feud with Osmund, foolishly determined to take the opportunity of telling him a little bit of his mind, and spoke out strongly on the impropriety of his coming in so late, and with creaking boots, forsooth. Bad Osmund sat down, gulping in his

wrath, but when the sermon was ended, he waited at the door till the priest came out of church, and in revenge struck him with his knife, *after the custom of those days.* The priest fell dead, and the congregation, in great wrath at the death of their pastor, set upon the murderer, stoned him to death a few steps from the church, and buried him where he fell. Until a few years ago, a cairn of stones, the very implements, perhaps, of his lapidation, marked the spot of his interment. After this tragical occurrence, the parish was without a clergyman for three years; till at last another pastor was introduced by a rich man of those parts, on the promise of the parishioners that he should be protected from harm."

I found, in the same book, a curious notice of one Erik Leganger, another clergyman. When he came to the parish, not a person in it could read or write. By his unremitting endeavours he wrought a great change in this respect, and the people progressed in wisdom and knowledge. This drew upon him the animosity of the Father of Evil himself. On one occasion, when the priest was

sledging to his other church, the foul fiend met him in the way; a dire contest ensued, which ended in the man of God overpowering his adversary, whom he treated like the witch Sycorax did Ariel, confining him "into a cloven pine."

A later annotator on this notable entry says, the only way of explaining this affair is by the fact that the priest, although a good man, had a screw loose in his head (skrue los i Hovedet). But this Judæus Apella ought to have remembered the case of Doctor Luther, not to mention Saint Dunstan.

The good Lehnsman, who entered with great enthusiasm into my desire for information on all subjects, now commenced reading an entry made by a former priest, with whom he had been acquainted, of his daily going out and coming in during the period it had pleased God to set him over that parish, with notices of his previous history. His father had been drowned while he was a child, and his widowed mother was left with three children, whom she brought up with great difficulty, owing to her narrow means. Being put

to school, he attracted the notice of the master, who encouraged him to persevere in his studies. Finally, by the assistance of friends, he got to the University, earning money for the purpose by acting as tutor in private families during the vacations. At last he passed his theological examination, but only as "haud illaudabilis;" the reason for which meagre commendation he attributes to his time being so taken up with private tuition. At the practical examination he came out "laudabilis," so that he had retrieved his position. He then mentions how that he was married to the betrothed of his boyhood and became a curate; till at length he was promoted to this place, which he had now left for better preferment, expressing the hope, in his own hand-writing, "that he had worked among his people not without profit. Amen."

At this moment, the good Lehnsman—whether it was that the heat or his fatigue in my behalf was too much for him, or whether it was that he was overcome by the simple and feeling record of his former pastor's early struggles—turned pale, and became deadly sick. Eventually he recovered,

and, in his politeness, sat down to dinner with me in his own house.

In the evening I took my fly-rod, and went down to the river with a retinue of forty rustics at my heels. The flies, however, having caught hold of one boy's cap, nearly breaking my rod, the crowd were alarmed for their eyes, and kept a respectful distance, while I pulled out a few trout; an exploit which drew from them many expressions of by no means mute wonder.

After this I sat down on a stone, and had a chat with these fellows. They had evidently got over the feeling so common among the peasantry of being afraid at being laughed at by the stranger and by each other. Many of them blurted out something. Riddles (Gaator or Gaade, allied to our word "guess,") were all the go. These are a very ancient national pastime. They were, however, of no great merit. Here are specimens:—

Rund som en egg,
Länger end kirke-vægg.

Round as an egg,
Longer than a church-wall.

Answer. A roll of thread.

Rund som solen, svart som jorde.
Round as the sun, swart as the earth.
[*i.e.*, the large round iron on which girdle-cake is baked.]
Hvad er det som go rund o giore eg?
What is that which goes round o' gars eggs?

Answer. A grindstone. A *double entendre* is contained in the word egg; which means either "edge," or "egg."

I know a wonderful tree,
The roots stand up and the top is below,
It grows in winter and lessens in summer.

Answer. A glacier.

Four gang, four hang,
Two show the way, two point to the sky,
And one it dangles after.

Answer. Cow with her legs, teats, eyes, horns, and tail.

What is that as high as the highest tree,
But the sun never shines on it?

Answer. The pith.

What goes from the fell to the shore
And does not move?

Answer. A fence.

These country-people are not deficient in proverbs—*e. g.*,

Another man's steed
Has always speed.

Much of what they said was spoken in an outlandish dialect, and what made it worse, when I

asked for an explanation, they all cried out together, like the boys in a Government school in India. Indeed, when they were once fairly afloat it was difficult to curb the general excitement.

Moe, a Norwegian writer, who has penetrated into many of the out-of-the-way valleys of this part of the country and Thelemarken, states that the peasants are provided with a large budget of traditional melodies; but more than this, these genuine and only representatives of the ancient "smoothers and polishers of language" (scalds), not only use the very strophe of those ancient improvisatores, but have also a knack of improvising songs on the spur of the moment, or, at all events, of grafting bits of local colouring into old catches.

The peasants around tipped me one or two of these staves. When the company are all assembled, one sings a verse, and challenging another to contend with him in song, another answers, and, after a few alternate verses, the two voices chime in together. What I heard was not extempore, but traditional in the valley.

One young fellow commenced a stave which

seemed to be a great favourite, for directly he began it, the others said, "To be sure, we all know that; sing it, Thorkil."

In the evening, true to his promise, old Solomon appeared. He had called to mind a tale that would perhaps please me.

"There was once on a time a shooter looking for fowl on the heights (heio) above Saetersdal. Well, on he went, doing nothing but looking up into the tree-tops for the fowl, when, all of a sudden, he found himself in a house he had never seen before. There were large chambers all round, and long corridors, and so many doors he could not number them. He went seeking about all over till he was tired. Folk he could see none, nor could he find his way out. At last he came to one chamber where he thought he could hear people, so he opened the door and looked in; and there sat a lassie alone (eisemo); so he spoke to her, and asked who lived there. So she answered they were Tuss folk, and that the house was so placed that nobody could see it till they got into it, and then one could not get out again.

'That's the way it went with me,' said she, mournfully; 'I have been here a long time now, but don't think I shall ever get out again.' The shooter on this got very frightened, and asked her if she could not tell him some way of escape. 'Well,' answered the girl, 'I'll tell you how you can do it, but you must first promise me to come back to the gaard and take me away.' This he promised at once to do without fail. 'Now, then, follow me, and open the door I point out. They are sitting at the board and eating (aa eta), and he who sits at the top is the king, and he's bigger and brawer than all the others, so that you'll know him directly. You must take your rifle, and aim at the king—only aim, you mustn't shoot. They'll be in such a fright they'll drive you out directly you heave up the gun; so you'll be all safe, and then you must think of me. You must come here next Thursday evening* as ever is, and the next, and the third; and then I'll follow you home—of that you may be certain.' So she

* The day on which Thor is on his rounds; and when, therefore, the little people are forced to sing small.

went and showed him the door, and he opened it and went in, and saw them all eating and drinking, and he up with his gun and pointed it at the one at the top of the table. Up they all jumped in alarm; he sprung out, they after him, and so he got clean out and safe home. On the first Thursday evening away he went to the Fell, and the second, and talked each time with the girl; but the third Thursday, on which all depended, he didn't come. I don't know why it was he did not keep his promise. Perhaps he thought if he took her home he should have to marry her. Anyhow it was base ingratitude. Some three or four years after the shooter was on the heights again, when he heard a girl's voice greet (gret), and lament that she was so dowie (dauv) and lonely, and could not get away to her home. He knew the voice at once—it was the girl he had deserted. He looked round and round, and about on all sides, but could see nothing but rocks and trees, and so nothing could be done for the poor lassie."

"Now I think of it," continued Solomon, "there

is a fuss story I've heard about this Rigegaard where you are stopping."

"Delightful!" thought I; "I never did yet sleep in a haunted house—it will be a capital adventure for the journal."

"It's a long time ago since, though. The 'hill-folks' used to come and take up their quarters here at Yule. It was every Yule the same; they never missed. They did keep it up, I believe you, in grand style, eating, and drinking, and clattering till they made the old house ring again. At last, Arne—he lived here in those days—gave the underground people notice to quit; he would not put up with it any longer. So off they went. In the hurry of departure they left some of their chattels, and, among others, a little copper horse, which Arne put out of sight, though he had no idea what it was used for. Next day, a Troll came down from the hill above yonder, into which the whole pack had retired for the present, and claimed the property. Arne, however, had taken a fancy to the horse, and would not give it up. They might have that little drinking-beaker of

strange workmanship, but the copper horse he was determined to keep. 'Well,' said the Troll, 'keep it then; but, mind this, never you part with it. If ever you do, this house will never be free from poverty and bad luck to the end of the present race.'* 'Good!' replied Arne, 'I'll take care of that, and my son will keep the horse after me, and hand it down as an heir-loom.'

"After this, the house went on prosperously, and no more was heard of the Trolls. Many years after, when Arne and his son were dead, the grandson parted with the horse. He had heard of the story, but he did not care; he did not want such trash—not he. After this, nothing went well with him. Poverty overtook him, and the family fell into the utmost distress."

"But," interposed I, "the people seem very well-to-do. I see no symptoms of poverty. The woman is a filthy creature, and that towel is dis-

* "If this glass do break or fall,
Farewell the luck of Edenhall."

That goblet was said to have been seized by a Musgrave at an elf-banquet.—See Longfellow.

gusting [all travellers in Norway, mind and take a towel with you], and the food she gives me is uneatable; but I hear they are rich."

"Yes," said Solomon, "but this is quite another branch of the family. The other one died quite out, and then the destiny altered. The present people have risen again in the world."

Talking of heir-looms, there is no copper horse now, of course, but there are several quaint things about the gaard, mementos of ancient days. Among the rest were two curious old hand-axes, used, as above-mentioned, by the Norwegians as walking sticks, when not applied to more desperate service, the iron being then used as a handle. The door-jambs of an out-house, moreover, are of singularly beautiful carving. These are a couple of feet in width, and formerly adorned the entrance to the old church of Hyllenstad, and give an idea of the great taste displayed by these people in ecclesiastical ornament in the Roman Catholic days. A tale is told here in wood, which I could not make out. It is most likely connected with the building of the church. Sundry figures appear with bellows

and hammers, and the implements of the carpenter. But these are afterwards exchanged for weapons of a more deadly nature. A man with a sword drives it right through another, while on the corresponding jamb a gentleman is seen in hot contest with a dragon, whose tail is artfully mingled with the arabesques around. All these figures are carved in bold relief. The work was no doubt by Norwegian artists, for the interlacing foliage is in that peculiarly graceful and broad style (mentioned by Mallet and Pontoppidan), which always seems to have been at home in this country. These beautiful panels, together with the slender pillars joined to them, sold at the auction of the old materials for one dollar!

So little has this valley been modernized, that I find in almost every house specimens of the Primstav, or old Runic calendar, handed down from father to son for centuries. "It is the same with those tales you have heard," said the Lehnsman; "the oldest people in the valley got them from the oldest people before them, though not in writing, but by oral tradition."

"And what is the state of morals up here?"

"The Nattefrieri is very much in vogue, but the evil consequences are not so great as may be imagined."

I must own that the revelations of the Lehnsman stripped those people, in my eyes, of a good deal of the romance with which their literary tastes had invested them Nor was my idea of the artless and unsophisticated simplicity of these rustic Mirandas enhanced, when I was told that match-making was not uncommon among the seniors, and the juniors consented to be thus bought and sold. Hear this, ye manœuvring mammas!

"With a little hoard of maxims preaching down a daughter's heart."

Yes! marriage here, as among the grand folks elsewhere, turns upon a question of lots of money —a handsome establishment. Perhaps, too, the jilts of refined and polished society will rejoice to hear that they are kept in countenance by the doings in Saetersdal. It sometimes, though rarely, happens that a girl is engaged to a young fellow, who means truly by her, the wedding guests are bidden, and she—bolts with another man.

CHAPTER XI.

Off again—Shakspeare and Scandinavian literature—A fat peasant's better half—A story about Michaelmas geese—Explanation of an old Norwegian almanack—A quest after the Fremmad man—A glimpse of death—Gunvar's snuff-box—More nursery rhymes—A riddle of a silver ring—New discoveries of old parsimony—The Spirit of the Woods—Falcons at home—The etiquette of tobacco-chewing—Lullabies—A frank invitation—The outlaw pretty near the mark—Bjaräen—A valuable hint to travellers—Domestic etcetera—Early morning—Social magpies—An augury—An eagle's eyrie—Meg Merrilies—Wanted an hydraulic press—A grumble at paving commissioners—A disappointment—An unpropitious station-master—Author keeps house in the wilderness—Practical theology—Story of a fox and a bear—Bridal stones—The Vatnedal lake—Waiting for the ferry—An unmistakable hint—A dilemma—New illustration of the wooden nutmeg truth—"Polly put the kettle on"—A friendly remark to Mr. Caxton—The real fountain of youth—Insectivora—The maiden's lament.

BIDDING adieu to the kind and hospitable Lehnsman and his spouse, whose courtesy and hospitality

made up for the forbidding ways of Madame Rige, I turned my face up the valley. The carriage-road having now ceased, my luggage is transposed to the back of a stout horse, which, like the ancient Scottish wild cattle, was milk-white, with black muzzle. The straddle, or wooden saddle, which crosses his back, is called klöv-sal. Curiously enough, the Connemara peasants give the name of "cleve" to the receptacles slung on either side the ponies for the purpose of carrying peat, and through which the animal's back *cleaves* like a wedge. A very fat man came puffing and panting up to my loft to fetch my gear.

"What!" said I, "are *you* going to march with me all that distance?" with an audible *aside* about his "larding the lean earth as he walks along." The allusion to Falstaff he of course did not understand. His literature is older than Shakspeare; indeed the bard of Avon often borrowed from it. Whence comes his "Man in the moon with his dog and bush," but from the fiction in the Northern mythology of Mâni (the moon), and the two children, Bil and Hiuki, whom she stole from

earth. Scott's Wayland Smith, too, he is nothing but Völund, the son of the Fin-king, who married a Valkyr by mistake, and used to practise the art of a goldsmith in Wolf-dale, and was hamstrung by the avaricious King Nidud, and forced to make trinkets for him on the desert isle of Saeverstad. Though it is only fair to say that the legend belonged also to the Anglo-Saxons, and indeed to most of the branches of the Gothic race. But we are forgetting our post-master. He was the first fat peasant I ever saw in this country.

"Nei, cors' (No, by the Rood). "I'm not equal to that. It's nearly four old miles. My wife, a very snil kone (discreet woman), will schuss you."

His better half accordingly appeared, clad in the dingy white woollen frock already described, reaching from the knee to the arm-holes, where is the waist. On this occasion, however, she had, for the purpose of expedition, put an extra girdle above her hips, making the brief gown briefer still, and herself less like a woman about to dance in a sack. Sending her on before, I sauntered along, stopping a second or two to examine the

huge unhewn slab before the church door, with a cross and cypher on it, and the date 1639; to which stone some curious legend attaches, which I have forgotten. Passing Solomon's house, and finding he had gone to the mountains, I left for him some flies, and a *douceur*, to the bewilderment of his son. At a house further up the valley I found a primstav two hundred years old, the owner of which perfectly understood the Runic symbols.

"That goose," said he, "refers to Martinsmass, (Nov. 11). That's the time when the geese are ready to kill."

So that our derivation of Michaelmas goose-eating from the old story of Queen Elizabeth happening to have been eating that dish on the day of the news of the defeat of the Spanish Armada, is a myth. We got the custom from Norway, but the bird being fit to eat on the 29th September, Englishmen were too greedy to wait, and transferred to the feast of the archangel the dish appertaining to the Bishop of Tours.

That's a lyster for Saint Lucia (13th Dec.); it means that they used to catch much fish against

Yule. That knife means that it is time to slaughter the pigs for Yule. That horn is Yule-horn [the vehicle for conveying ale to the throats of the ancient Norskmen]. That's Saint Knut (Jan. 7th). That's his bell, to ring winter out. The sun comes back then in Thelemarken. Old folks used to put their hands behind their backs, take a wooden ale-bowl in their teeth, and throw it over their back; if it fell bottom upwards, the person would die in that year. That's St. Brettiva, (Jan. 11), when all the leavings of Yule are eat up. You see the sign is a horse. I'll tell you how that is. Once on a time a bonder in Thelemarken was driving out that day. The neighbour (nabo) asked him if he knew it was Saint Brettiva's day. He answered—

> Brett me here, brett me there,
> I'll brett (bring) home a load of hay, I swear.

The horse stumbled, and broke its foot; that's the reason why the day is marked with a horse in Thelemarken.

"That's St. Blasius (Feb. 3), marked with a ship. If it blows (bläse) on that day, it will blow

all the year through. That's a very particular day. We must not use any implement that goes round on it, such as a mill, or a spindle, else the cattle would get a swimming in the head (Sviva).

"That's St. Peter's key (Feb. 22). Ship-folks begin to get their boats ready then. As the weather is that day it will be forty days after.

"That," continued this learned decipherer of Runes, "is St. Matthias (24th Feb.) If it's cold that day, it will get milder, and *vice versâ;* and therefore the saying is, St. Matthias bursts the ice; if there is no ice, he makes ice. The fox darn't go on the ice that day for fear it should break.

"That's a mattock (hakke) for St. Magnus (16th April). We begin then to turn up the soil.

"That's St. Marcus (25th April). That's Stor Gangdag (great procession-day). The other gang-days are Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday before Ascension."

"And why are they called Gang-days?"

"Because a procession used to go round the

fields, and the priest, at their head, held mass, to drive away all evil spirits."

Here, then, we see the origin of our beating the bounds. Although, perhaps, the custom may be traced to some ceremonial in hônour of Odin akin to the Ambarvalia at Rome in honour of Ceres. According to an old tradition, however, it originated thus. There was, many years ago, a great drought in Norway about this period of the year. A general procession-day was ordered in consequence, together with a fast, which was kept so strictly, that the cattle were muzzled, and the babe in the cradle kept from the breast. Just before the folks went to church it was as dry as ever, but when they came out, it was raining hard. We Christians ring the "passing bell" on the death of anybody, but are perhaps not aware that it began in northern superstition. Sprites, as we have mentioned elsewhere, can't bear bells,—one of them was once heard lamenting in Denmark that he could stay no longer in the country on account of the din of the church bells. So, to scare away the evil spirits, and let the departing soul have a quiet passage, the sexton tolls the bell.

"That's Gowk's-mass (May 1); you see the gowk (cuckoo) in the tree. That's a great bird that. They used to say—

North, corpse-gowk, south, sow-gowk,
West, will-gowk, east, woogowk.

"What's the meaning of that?"

"Why, if you heard the cuckoo first in the north, the same year you would be a corpse; if in the south, you would have luck in sowing; if in the west, your will would be accomplished; if in the east, you would have luck in wooing.

"That's Bjornevaak (bear's waking day) May 22. You see it's a bear. They say the bear leaves his 'hi' that day. On midwinter (Jan. 12) he gave himself a turn round.*

"That's Saint Sunniva Bergen's Saint† (July 8).

* So the old French proverb:—

"Quatorze Janvier,
L'ours sort de taniére,
Fait trois tours,
Et rentre pour quarante jours."

† Sunniva was an Irish king's daughter. In order to escape compulsory marriage with a heathen, she took ship, and was driven by tempests on the Isle of Selia, near Stad, in Norway, and, with her attendants, found shelter in a

"That's Olsok (St. Olaf's day), July 29, marked with an axe. The bonder must not mow that day, or there will come vermin on the cattle.

"That's Laurentius' day, marked with a gridiron.

"That's Kverne Knurran, marked with a mill-stone, Sept. 1. If it's dry that day the millers will come to want water.

"That's vet-naet (winter-night), Oct. 14, when the year began. That's a glove,* to show cold weather is coming. There's an old Runic rhyme about that, where Winter says:—

> On winter-night for me look out,
> On Fyribod (Oct. 28) I come, without doubt;
> If I delay till Hallow e'en,
> Then I bow down the fir-tree green.

---

cave. The heathens on the mainland, on the look-out for windfalls, observed that there were people on the desert island, and immediately put off to it. At this juncture, through the prayers of Sunniva and her friends, the rocks split, the cave became blocked up, and the savages drew the island blank. In 1014, when Olaf Trygveson landed here from Northumberland, breathing slaughter against the pagans, he discovered the bones of Sunniva, and she was at once canonized.

* The similarity between vetr, the old word for winter, and vöttr, the old word for vante (glove), most likely suggested the use of this symbol.

The "Tale of the Calendar"* was, however, now interrupted by a tap at the window, and a man screams out—

"Where is the Fremmad man? where is the Fremmad man?"

"The stranger is here in the house," was the reply.

And in came a man, who had evidently just dressed in his best, with something very like death written in his sunken cheeks, starting eyes, and sharpened features.

"Can you tell me what is good for so and so?" he asked. "Oh! what pain I endure."

The poor fellow was clearly suffering from the stone, and there was no doctor within a great many days' journey. His doom was evidently sealed.

Further up the valley, a fierce thunder-storm coming on, I entered one of the smoke-houses above described, where an old lady, Gunvor Thorsdatter, bid me welcome. She offered me her mull

* Much of the above explanations of the Runes has been thrown together by Professor T. A. Munck, in the *Norsk Folke Kalender* for 1848.

of home-dried sneeshing—it was rather a curious affair, being shaped like a swan's-egg pear, and sprigged all over with silver. A very small aperture, stopped by a cork, was the only way of getting at the precious dust. Gunvor was above eighty, but in full possession of her faculties, and I judged her therefore not an unlikely person to have some old stories.

"What do you sing to the babies when you want to make them sleep?"

"I don't know. All sorts of things."

"Well, will you repeat me one?"

She looked hard at me for a moment, and suddenly all the deep furrows across her countenance puckered up and became contorted, just like a ploughed field when the harrow has passed over it. A stifled giggle next escaped her through her *erkos odontôn*, which was still white, and without gaps. A slight suspicion that I was making fun of her I at once removed from her mind; then, looking carefully round, and seeing that there was nobody else by, she croaked out, in a sort of monotonous melody, the following, which I give literally in English:—

Row, row to Engeland,
To buy my babe a pearlen-band,
New breeches and new shoes,
So to its mother baby goes.

This sounds like our—

"To market, to market, to buy a plum-bun."

Another, the first lines of which remind one of our—

Rockabye, babye, thy cradle is green,
Father's a nobleman, mother's a queen.

Tippi, Tippi, Tua (evidently our "Dibity, Dibity, Do"),
Mother was a frua (lady),
Father was of gentle blood,
Brother was a minstrel good;
His bow so quick he drew,
The strings snapt in two.
Longer do not play
On your strings, I pray:
Strings they cost money,
Money in the purse,
Purse in the kist,
Kist in the safe,
Safe is in the boat,
Boat on board the ship,
Ship it lies in Amsterdam,
What's the skipper's name?
His name is called Helje;
Have you aught to sell me?
Apples and onions, onions and apples,
Pretty maidens come and buy.

This species of accumulated jingle is called "Reglar," and reminds us of "The House that Jack built."

Another, sung by a woman with a child on her knee :—

Ride along, ride a cock-horse,
So, with the legs across ;
Horse his name is apple-grey* (abel-graa),
Little boy rides away,
Where shall little boy ride to ?
To the king's court to woo ;
At the king's court,
They're all gone out,
All but little dogs twain,
Fastened with a chain :
Their chains they do gnaw,
And say "Wau, wau, wau."

"Very good," said I. "Many thanks. Have you any gaade (riddles) ?"

Upon which, the old lady immediately repeated this :—

Sister sent to sister her'n,
Southwards over the sea,
With its bottom out, a silver churn,
Guess now what that can be.

Answer. A silver ring.

* Hence evidently comes our "dapple," *i.e.*, mottled like an apple.

Before parting with her, I begged the old lady to accept a small coin in return for her rhymes, which she said she had heard from her grandmother; but this she indignantly refused to accept, begging me at the same time, as she saw a man approaching, not to say a word about what she had been telling me. The fact is, as has been observed by the Norwegians themselves, that the peasants fancy that nobody would inquire about these matters unless for the sake of ridiculing them, of which they have a great horror. Although they retain these rhymes themselves, they imagine that other people must look upon them as useless nonsense.

The man who approached the cottage brought with him a tiny axe, a couple of inches long, which he had dug up in the neighbourhood. Its use I could not conceive, unless, perhaps, it was the miniature representation of some old warrior's axe, which the survivors were too knowing and parsimonious to bury with the corpse, and so they put in this sham. That the ancient Scandinavians were addicted to this thrift is well known. In Copenhagen, as we have already seen, facsimiles,

on a very small scale, of bracelets, &c. which have been found in barrows, are still preserved. This peasant had likewise a bear-skin for sale. The bear he shot last spring, and the meat was bought by the priest.

The storm being over, I walked on through the forest alone, my female guide being by this time, no doubt, many miles in advance. All houses had ceased, but, fortunately, there was but one path, so that I could not lose my way. How still the wood was! There was not a breath of wind after the rain, so that I could distinctly hear the sullen booming of the river, now some distance off. As I stopped to pick some cloud-berries, which grew in profusion, I heard a distant scream. It was some falcons at a vast height on the cliff above, which I at first thought were only motes in my eyes. With my glass I could detect two or three pairs. They had young ones in the rock, which they were teaching to fly, and were alternately chiding them and coaxing them. No wonder the young ones are afraid to make a start of it. If I were in their places I should feel considerable reluctance about making a first flight.

At length I spied a cottage to the right in the opening of a lateral valley. Hereabout, I had heard, were some old bauta stones; but an intelligent girl who came up, told me a peasant had carried them off to make a wall. This girl, who wore two silver brooches on her bosom, besides large globular collar-studs and gilt studs to her wristbands, asked me if I would not come and have a mjelk drikke (drink of milk).

Jorand Tarjeisdatter was all the time busily engaged in chewing harpix (the resinous exudation of the fir-tree); presently, on another older woman coming in, she pulled out the quid, and gave it to the new-comer, who forthwith put it into her own mouth. But after all this is no worse than Dr. Livingstone drinking water which had been sucked up from the ground by Bechuana nymphs, and spit out by them into a vessel for the purpose.

Jorand was nice-looking, and had a sweet voice, and without the least hesitation she immediately sang me one or two lullabies, *e.g.*—

Upon the lea there stands a little cup
Full of ale and wine,
So dance my lady up.
Upon the lea there stands a little can
Full of ale and wine,
So dance my lady down.

She then chanted the following :—

Hasten, hasten, then my goats
Along the northern heights,
Homewards over rocky fell,
Tange,* Teine, Bear-the-bell,
Dros also Duri,
Silver also Fruri,
Ole also Snaddi,
Now we've got the goats all,
Come hither buck and come hither dun,
Come hither speckled one,
Young goats and brown goats come along,
That's the end of my good song,
Fal lal lal la.

Another.

Baby, rest thee in thy bed,
Mother she's spinning blue thread,
Brother's blowing on a buck's horn,
Sister thine is grinding corn,
And father is beating a drum.

---

* Names of goats.

She then started off with a stave full of satirical allusions to the swains of the neighbourhood, showing how Od was braw, and Ola a stour prater (stor Pratar), Torgrim a fop, and Tarjei a Gasconader—

> But Björn from all he bore the bell,
> So merry he, and could "stave" so well.

The whole reminded me of the catalogue in the glee of "Dame Durden."

"But how long will you stop with us? If you'll wait till Sunday, we'll have a selskab (party). Some of the men will come home from the mountains, and then you shall hear us stave properly."

She seemed much disappointed when I told her I must be off there and then, my luggage was already miles ahead.

Leaving her with thanks, I made a detour of a couple of miles into the side valley, to see a very ancient gaard, to which a story attaches. Roynestad, as it was called, was built of immense logs, some as much as three feet thick;* on one of

* In the district of Lom, where the climate is said to be the driest in Norway, there are the remains of a house

which several bullet marks were visible. Here once dwelt a fellow bearing the same names as the murderer of the priest at Valle, viz., Wund Osmund. He had served in the wars, and seen much of foreign lands. For some reason he incurred the displeasure of the authorities, and fled for refuge to his mountain home. A party of officials came to seize him. When he saw them approaching, he took aim with his cross-bow at a maalestock (pole for land-measuring), which he had placed in the meadow in front of his house, and sent three or four shafts into it.

> Cloudesley with a bearing arrow
> Clave the wand in two.

The Dogberries were alarmed, and, after discharging a few bullets, turned tail.

There were in the loft some curious reminiscences of this daring fellow, *e.g.*, an ancient sword, and some old tapestry, or rather canvas painted

in which Saint Olaf is said to have lodged. There was, not long ago, a house at Naes, in Hallingdal, where the timbers were so huge that two sufficed to reach to the top of the doorway from the ground. This old wood often gets so hard that it will turn the edge of the axe.

over with some historical subject, which I could not make out. In ancient times the interior of the houses was often decorated with hangings of this kind (upstad, aaklæd). But what I chiefly wanted to see was a genuine old Pagan idol, which had been preserved on the spot many hundred years. But "Faxe," I found, was not long ago split up for fuel. The real meaning of "faxe" is horse with uncut mane, so that it was most likely connected with the worship of Odin.

Regaining my old road, by a short cut, which fortunately did not turn out a longer way, I plodded on to Bjarüen, a lonely house in the forest. Here I found my excellent conductress, who, alarmed at my non-appearance, had halted, and it being now dusk, further advance to-night was not to be thought of.

Those horrible cupboards, or berths, fixed against the wall, how I dreaded getting into one of them! A stout, red-cheeked lass, the daughter of the house, was fortunately at home, and posted up the hill for some distance, returning with a regular hay-cock on her back, which improved matters. But before I bestowed myself thereon, I took care

to place under the coverlet a branch of Pors, which I had cut in the bog. It did for me what the aureus ramus did, if I remember rightly, for Æneas, gained me access to the realms of sleep. The fleas, it is true, mustered strong, and moved vigorously to the attack, but the scent of the shrub seemed to take away their appetite for blood, and I remained unmolested.

The stout lass brought me a slop-basin to wash in next morning, and instead of a towel, an article apparently not known in these parts, a clean chemise of her own. The house could not, by-the-bye, boast of any knives and forks. No sugar was to be had, and the milk, which was about three months old, was so sharp that it seemed to get into my head, certainly into my nose.

Next morning, after some miles walk through uninterrupted solitudes, I found myself on the shores of a placid lake, from which the mist was just lifting up its heavy white wings. As I stood for a moment to look, a large fly descended on the smooth water, and was immediately gobbled up by a trout. Over head, half hidden in the mist, were

perpendicular white precipices, stained with streaks of black, which returned my halloo with prompt defiance. Between their base and the lake vast stone blocks were strewed around, and yet close by I now discovered a farm-house exposed to a similar fall.

> On fair Loch Ranza shone the early day,
> Soft wreaths of cottage smoke are upward curled
> From the lone hamlet, which her inland bay
> And circling mountains sever from the world.

That's a very proper quotation, no doubt, but the smoke must be left out. The farm was deserted; not a soul at home, the family having gone up to the mountain pasture. We must, however, except a couple of sad and solitary magpies, which, as we drew near, uttered some violent interjections, and jumped down from the house-top, where they had been pruning themselves in the morning sun. They must be much in want of company, for they followed our steps for some distance, and then left us with a peculiar cry. Would that I had been an ancient augur to have known what that last observation of theirs was!

The path now wound up the noted Bykle Sti, or

ladder of Bykle, which is partly blasted out of the rocks, and partly laid on galleries of fir logs. Formerly, this place was very dangerous to the traveller. Here the river, which has been flowing at no great distance from us all the way, comes out of a lake. From a considerable height I gaze down below, and see it gurgling and then circling with oily smoothness through a series of black pits scooped out in the foundation rocks of this fine defile. Opposite me is a huge precipice, whence the screams that are borne ever and anon upon my ear, proclaim the vicinity of an eagle's eyrie. Below, the river widens again, and I see a number of logs slumbering heads and tails on its shores. We are now more than two thousand feet above the sea, but shall have to descend again to the lake, and cross it, as the road soon terminates entirely.

The ferry-boat was large and flat-bottomed, but all the efforts of my attendant and myself failed to launch it. At this moment a sort of Meg Merrilies, clad in grey frieze, with hair to match, streaming over her shoulders, made her appearance.

"Come and help us!"

"It's no use. The boat's fast; the water has fallen from the dry weather, and old Erik himself can't move it."

"Well, let us try. You take one oar, and Thora the other, and I'll go and haul in front."

The two women used their oars like leavers, when suddenly, Oh, horror!—snap went one of them. Tearing up a plank, which was nailed over the gunwale as a seat, I placed it as a launching way for the leviathan. This helped us wonderfully, and at last the unwieldly machine floated. The Danish Count would have flung "Trahuntque siccas machinæ carinas" in our faces, but he would have had to alter the epithet, as the boat was thoroughly water-logged. So much so, that when the horse and effects and we three were on board, it leaked very fast. The women took the oars, the broken one being mended by the garters of Meg Merrilies. The water rose in the boat much quicker than I liked, and I could not help envying a couple of great Northern divers, which my glass showed me floating corkily on the smooth water—fortunately it was so—if the truth were known they doubtless

looked upon us with a mixture of commiseration and contempt.

When we arrived safely on the other side, which was distant about half-a-mile, I gave our help-in-need sixpence. She was perfectly amazed at my liberality.

"Du er a snil karro du." (You're a good fellow, you are.)

She was, she told me, the mother of fourteen children. Her pluck and sagacity were considerable. Now, will it be believed, that this awkward passage might altogether be avoided if the precipice were blasted for two or three score yards, so as to allow of the path winding round it. As it is, a traveller might arrive here, and if the boat were on the other side, might wait for a whole day or more, as nobody could hear or see him, and no human habitation is near.

As we rose the hill to Bykle, I saw two or three species of mushrooms, one of which, of a bright Seville-orange colour, with white imposthumes, I found to be edible. Visions of a comfortable place to put my head into smiled upon me, as I saw a

church-spire rising up the mountain, and a gaard, the station-house, not far from it. But alas! I was doomed to be disappointed—all the family were at the Stöl, and the doors and windows fastened. A man fortunately appeared presently, whom I persuaded for a consideration to go and fetch the landlord. My guide meantime departed, as she was anxious to get half home before night. Meantime I lay on some timbers, and went to sleep. Out of this I was awakened by a sharp sort of chuckle close to my ear, and on raising myself I found that two magpies had bitten a hole into the sack, and were getting at my biscuits and cheese. It was with some difficulty that I drove off these impudent Gazza-ladras: and as soon as I went to sleep again, they recommenced operations. In three hours the messenger returned with the intelligence that the station-master would not come; the road stopped here, and he was not bound to schuss people Nordover (to the North).

There was nothing for it but to go up the mountain, and wade through the morasses to see the fellow. Fortunately I found an adjoining stöl,

where dwelt another peasant, Tarald (Anglicè Thorold) Mostue, whom I persuaded to come down and open his house for the shelter of myself and luggage. He brought down with him some fresh milk, the first I had tasted since leaving Christiansand. After lighting for me a fire, and making up a bed, he returned to his châlet, promising to return by six A.M. with a horse, and schuss me to Vatnedal. Here, then, I was all alone, but I managed to make myself comfortable, and slept well under the shadow of my own fig-tree—I mean the branch of Pors—secure from the fleas and bugs! Tarald appeared in the morning, and off we started. He was, I found, one of the Lesere or Norwegian methodists.

"Do they bann (banne=the Scotch 'ban') much in the country you come from?" inquired he, as we jumped over the dark peat-hags, planting our feet on the white stones, which afforded a precarious help through them.

"I fear some of them do."

"But I've not heard you curse."

"No; I don't think it right."

"Where does the Pope (Pave) live?"

"At Rome."

"They call it the great —— of Babylon, don't they? Is Babylon far from Rome?"

"It does not exist now. It was destroyed for the wickedness of its inhabitants, and according to the prophecy it has become something like this spot here, a possession for the cormorant and the bittern, and pools of water."

"Ah! I had forgotten about that; I know the New Testament very well, but not the Old."

Tarald had also something to say about Luther's Postils; but like most of these Lesere, he had no relish for a good story or legend. He had a cock-and-a-bull story—excuse the confusion of ideas—of a bear and a fox, but it was so rigmarole and pointless, that it reminded me of Albert Smith's engineer's story. The real tale is as follows. I picked it up elsewhere:—Once on a time, when the beasts could talk, a fox and a bear agreed to live together and have all things in common. So they got a bit of ground, and arranged, so that one year the bear should get the tops and the fox the bottoms

of the crop, and another year the bear the bottoms and the fox the tops. The first year they sowed turnips, and, according to agreement, the bear got the tops and the fox the bottoms. The bear did not much like this, but the fox showed him clearly that there was no injustice done, as it was just as they had agreed. Next year, too, said he, the bear would have the advantage, for he would get the bottoms and the fox the tops. In the spring the fox said he was tired of turnips. "What said the bear to some other crop?" "Well and good," answered the bear. So they planted rye. At harvest the fox got all the grain, and the bear the roots, which put him in a dreadful rage, for, being thick-witted, he had not foreseen the hoax. At last he was pacified, and they now agreed to buy a keg of butter for the winter. The fox, as usual, was up to his tricks, and used to steal the butter at night, while Bruin slept. The bear observed that the butter was diminishing daily, and taxed the fox. The fox replied boldly—"We can easily find out the thief; for directly we wake in the morning we'll examine each other, and see whether either of us has any butter smeared about him." In the

morning the bear was all over butter; it regularly dropped off him. How fierce he got! the fox was so afraid, that he ran off into the wood, the bear after him. The fox hid under a birch-tree root, but bruin was not to be done, and scratched and scratched till he got hold of the fox's foot. "Don't take hold of the birch-root, take hold of the fox's foot," said Reynard, tauntingly. So the bear thought it was only a root he had hold of, and let the foot go, and began scratching again. "Oh! now do spare me," whispered the fox; "I'll show you a bees'-nest, which I saw in an old birch. I know you like honey." This softened the bear, for he was desperately fond of honey. So they went both of them together into the wood, and the fox showed the bear a great tree-bole, split down the middle, with the wedge still sticking in it. "It's in there," said the fox. "Just you squeeze into the crack, and press as hard as you can, and I'll strike the wedge, and then the log will split." The trustful bear squeezed himself in accordingly, and pushed as hard as ever he could. Reynard knocked out the block, the tree closed, and poor Bruin was fast. Presently the man

came back who had been hewing the tree, and directly he spied the bear, he took his axe and split open his skull; and—so there is no more to tell.

On the bare, rocky pass which separates Saetersdal from Vatnedal were several stones, placed in a line, a yard or two apart from each other.

"Those are the Bridal Stones," observed Tarald. "A great many years ago there was no priest on the Bykle side (I suppose this was after the murder by Wund Osmond, the Lehnsman), and a couple that wanted to wed came all the way over here to be married. Those stones they set up in memory of the event. On this stone sat the bridegroom, and on that the bride."

The mountain pink (Lycnis viscaria) occurs on most of these stony plateaus. I also met with a mighty gentian, with purplish brown flower, emitting a rich aromatic odour, the root of which is of an excessively bitter taste, and is gathered for medicinal purposes.

A mile or two beyond this we stood in a rocky gorge, from which we had a glorious view of the Vatnedal lake, and another beyond it several hun-

dred feet below us. After a very precipitous descent, on the edge of which stood several blocks, placed as near as they could be without rolling over, we skirted the lake through birch-grove and bog till we got opposite a house visible on the further shore. At this a boat was kept, but it was very uncertain whether anybody was at home. Leaving Tarald to make signals, I was speedily enticing some trout at a spot where a snow-stream rushed into the lake. At last Tarald cried out—

"All right, there are folk; I see a woman." And sure enough, after a space, I could discern a boat approaching. A brisk and lively woman was the propelling power. We were soon on the bosom of the deep—the two men, the woman, and the horse, all, in spite of my protestations, consigned to a flat-bottomed leaky punt, though the wind was blowing high. The horse became uneasy, and swayed about, and, being larger than usual, he gave promise of turning the boat upside-down before very long. I immediately unlaced my boots, and pulled off my coat. The Norwegians seemed at this to awake to a sense of danger, and rowed back to the shore; the horse was landed and hobbled

when he forthwith began cropping the herbage. We then made a safe passage. Unfortunately, Helge's husband, whom I had counted on to help me on my journey, had started with his horse the day before to buy corn at Suledal, thirty-five miles off.

In this dilemma, I begged Tarald to take pity on me, or I might be hopelessly stopped for some days. The "Leser" was like "a certain Levite." He had been complaining all day of fatigue. He felt so ill, he said, he could hardly get along. I had even given him some medicine. In spite, however, of his praiseworthy antipathy to swearing, and the nasal twang with which he poured out some of his moral reflections, I had felt some misgivings about the sincerity of his professions; for he had begged me to write to the Foged, and complain of the absence of the station-master at Bykle, that he might be turned out, and he get his place. And, sure enough, I found him to be a wooden nutmeg with none of the real spice of what he professed to be about him. No sooner did he finger the dollars, than his fatigue and indisposition suddenly left him, and he started off home with great alacrity,

reminding me of those cripples in Victor Hugo's *Hunchback of Notre Dame*, who, from being hardly able to crawl, suddenly became all life and motion.

"Truly," mused I, "these Lesere are all moonshine. They profess to be a peculiar people, but are by no means zealous of good works. But this lies in the nature of things. Which is the best article, the cloth stiffened and puffed up with starch and 'Devil's dust,' or the rough Tweed, which makes no pretence to show whatever, but, nevertheless, does duty admirably well against wind and weather?" But enough of the thin-lipped, Pharisaical Tarald.

There was a beaminess about the hard-favoured countenance of Helge Tarjeisdatter Vatnedal, together with a *brusque* out-and-out readiness of word and deed, that jumped with my humour. The fair Tori too, her daughter, with her good-tempered blue eyes and mouth, and comfortable-looking figure, swept up the floor, and split some pine stumps with an axe, and lit the fire, and acted "Polly put the kettle on" with such an evident resolve to make me at home, that the prospect of being delayed in such quarters looked much less

formidable. The two women had netted some gorgeous trout that afternoon, and I was soon discussing them.

"We must go now," said Helge.

"Where to?"

"To the stöl. We are all up there now. It was only by chance we came down here to-day. Will you go with us, or will you stop here? You will be all alone.

"Never mind; I'll stop here."

"Very good. We know of a man living a long way off on the other lake. We'll send a messenger to him by sunrise, and see if he can schuss you. In the morning we'll come back and let you know."

My supper finished, by the fast waning light I began reading a bit of Bulwer's *Caxtons*. The passage I came upon was Augustine's recipe for satiety or *ennui*—viz., a course of reading of legendary out-of-the-way travel. But I can give Mr. Caxton a better nostrum still—To do the thing yourself instead of reading of it being done. In the Museum at Berlin there is a picture called the Fountain of Youth. On the left-hand

side you see old and infirm people approaching, or being brought to the water. Before they have got well through the stream, their aspect changes; and arrived on the other bank, they are all rejuvenescence and frolic. To my mind this is not a bad emblem of the change that comes over the traveller who passes out of a world of intense over-civilization into a country like this. How delightful to be able to dress, and eat, and do as one likes, to have escaped for a season, at least, from the tittle-tattle, the uneasy study of appearances, the "what will Mr. So-and-so think?" the fuss and botheration of crowded cities, with I don't know how many of the population thinking of nothing but getting 10 per cent. for their money. Sitting alone in the gloaming, under the shadow of the great mountains, with the darkling lake in front, now once more tranquil, and lulled again like a babe that has cried itself to sleep—the sound of the distant waterfalls booming on the ear—a star or two twinkling faintly in the sky—I might have set my fancy going to a considerable extent.

But bed, with its realities, recalled my wandering thoughts. That was the hour of trial! A person,

who ought to know something about these matters, apostrophized sleep as being fond of smoky cribs, and uneasy pallets, and delighting in the hushing buzz of night flies. I had all these to perfection, the flies especially, quite a plague of them. But nature's soft nurse would not visit me. The fact was, I had lost my branch, and the "insectivora" of all descriptions, as a learned farmer of my acquaintance phrased it, roved about like free companions, ravaging at will. Knocked up was I completely the next morning, when at six o'clock the women returned with the welcome intelligence that one Ketil of the Bog was bound for that Goshen, Suledal, to buy corn, and would be my guide.

"I am so weary," said I; "I have not slept a wink."

With looks full of compassion, the women observed—"We thought you wouldn't. We knew you would be afraid. That kept you awake, no doubt."

Whether they meant fear of the fairies or of freebooters, they did not say. My assurance to the contrary availed but little to convince them.

No solitary traveller in Norway at the present day need fear robbery or violence. The women soon shouldered my effects, not permitting me to carry anything, and we started through morass, and brake, and rocks, for the shieling of Ketil of the Bog.

At one spot where we rested, the fair Tori chanted me the following strain, which is based on a national legend, the great antiquity of which is testified by the alliterative metre of the original. It refers to a girl who had been carried off by robbers.

Tirreli, Tirreli Tove,
Twelve men met in the grove;
Twelve men mustered they,
Twelve brands bore they.
The goatherd they did bang,
The little dog they did hang,
The stour steer they did slay,
And hung the bell upon a spray,
And now they will murder me,
Far away on the wooded lea.

CHAPTER XII.

Ketil—A few sheep in the wilderness—Brown Ryper—The Norwegian peasants bad naturalists—More bridal stones—The effect of glacial action on rocks—"Catch hold of her tail"—Author makes himself at home in a deserted châlet—A dangerous playfellow—Suledal lake—Character of the inhabitants of Saetersdal—The landlord's daughter—Wooden spoons—Mountain paths—A mournful cavalcade—Simple remedies—Landscape painting—The post-road from Gugaard to Bustetun—The clergyman of Roldal parish—Poor little Knut at home—A set of bores—The pencil as a weapon of defence—Still, still they come—A short cut, with the usual result—Author falls into a cavern—The vast white Folgefond—Mountain characteristics—Author arrives at Seligenstad—A milkmaid's lullaby—Sweethearts—The author sees visions—The Hardanger Fjord—Something like scenery.

I WAS quite at Ketil's mercy in a pecuniary point of view. But he was not one of the Lesere, and was moderate in his demands. After a scramble through his native bog, which would, I think, have put a very moss-trooper on his mettle, we debouched

on the end of a lake. Here we took boat, and there being a spanking breeze, we soon shot over the six miles of water. With a stern-wind, fishing was not to be thought of; I never found it answer. At the other end of the lake was a stone cabin, where I took shelter from the blast, while Ketil went in search of his horse.

While I was engaged caulking the seams in my appetite, a fine young fellow in sailor's costume, who had rowed from the opposite shore, looked in. Talleif, as he was yclept, was from Tjelmodal, with a flock of fourteen thousand sheep and twenty milking goats. He and his comrade, Lars, sleep in an old bear-hole in the Urden (loose rocks). They get nine skillings (threepence) a-head for tending the sheep for ten weeks. Besides this, they pay twelve dollars to Ketil and two other peasants, who are the possessors of these wilds. Their chief food is the milk of the goats. In winter they get their living by fishing.

"Have you any ryper here," said I to Ketil, as we passed through some very likely-looking birch thickets.

"Yes."

"What colour?"

"Grey."

"Are there no brown ones?"

"No; they are grey, and in winter snow-white."

At this instant I heard the well-known cackle of the cock of the brown species, and a large covey of these birds rose out of the covert.

"Well, they are brown," said he; "now, I never laid mark to (remarked) that before."

So much for the observation of these people. Never rely upon them for any information respecting birds, beasts, fishes, or plants. All colours are the same to a blind man, and they are such. I take the man's word, however, for the fact of there being abundance of otters about and reindeer higher up.

Terribly desolate was that Norwegian Fjeld that now lay before us. But setting our faces resolutely to the ascent, we topped it in two and a half hours, the way now and then threading mossy lanes, so to say, sunk between sloping planes of

rock. Screeching out in the unharmonious jargon of Vatnedal, which the Saetersdal people, proud of their own musical lungs, call "an alarm," Ketil pointed to a row of stones upon the ridge similar to those I had seen the day before, also called the Bridal stones, and with a similar legend attached to them. What poverty of invention. Why not call them Funeral stones by way of ringing the changes? But *no*; the people of this country will escort a bride much further than a bier. The honours of sepulture are done with a niggard grace.

As we now began to descend past beds of unmelted snow, I had a good opportunity of seeing the manifest effect of glacial action upon the rocks, the strata of which had been heaved up perpendicularly. Rounded by the ice in one direction, and quartered by their own cleavage in another, the rocks looked for all the world like a vast dish of sweetbreads; just the sort of tid-bit for that colossal Jotul yonder, behind us, with the portentously groggy nose, who stands out in sharp relief against the sky. What Gorgon's head did

that? thought I; as the picture in the National Gallery of Phineus and Co. turned to stone at the banquet occurred to my mind. But my reverie was disturbed by a cry from Ketil of the Bog.

"Catch hold of her tail!"

Which exclamation I not apprehending at the moment, the mare slipped down a smooth sweetbread, and nearly came to grief.

Lower down we passed some ice-cold tarns, where I longed to bathe and take some of the limpid element into my thirsting pores, but prudently abstained. After a long descent we came upon a deserted châlet, the door of which we unfastened, and plundered it of some sour milk. We shall pay the owner down below. After this refreshment we plunged into a deep gorge, skirting an elv just fresh from its cradle, and which was struggling to get away most lustily for so young an infant.

"Ah! it's only small now," said Ketil; "but you should see it in a flom (flood). It's up in a moment. Two years ago a young fellow crossed there with a horse, and spent the day in cutting grass on the heights. It rained a good deal. He

waited too long, and when he tried to get over, horse and man were drowned. They were found below cut to pieces."

I must take care what I'm about, thought I, as I nearly slipped down the precipice, which was become slippery from a storm of rain which now overtook us.

Below this the scenery becomes more varied, in one place a smiling little amphitheatre of verdure contrasting with the bold mountains which towered to an immense height above.

At length we descend to Suledal lake drenched to the skin. A ready, off-hand sort of fellow, Thorsten Brathweit, at once answers my challenge to row me over the water to Naes. The scenery of the lake is truly superb. The elv, which we had been following, here finds it's way to the lake by a mere crack through the rocks of great depth. In one place a big stone that had been hurled from above had become tightly fixed in the cleft, and formed a bridge. Thorsten had plenty to say.

"Two reindeer, he told me, were shot last week

on the Fjeld I had just crossed. Large salmon get up into the lake. The trout in it run to ten pounds in weight; what I took were only small.

The landlord at Naes, where I spent the night, was astonished that I should have ventured through Saetersdal.

"They are such a Ro-bygd folk there," observed he, punningly, *i. e.*, barbarous sort of people.

The race I now encounter are, in fact, of quite a different costume and appearance. The married daughter of the house possessed a good complexioned oval face, with a close-fitting black cloth cap, edged with green, in shape just like those worn by the Dutch vrows, in Netscher's and Mieris' pictures. Her light brown hair was cut short behind like a boy's; such is the fashion among the married women hereabouts.

"Long hair is an ornament to the woman," observed I to her.

"She didn't know; that was the custom there."

The only spoon in the house was a large wooden one, but as by long practice I have arrived at such a pitch of dexterity that I might almost ven-

ture on teaching my grandmother to suck eggs, this occasioned me little inconvenience in transferring to my mouth the parboiled mementoes left by a hen now, alas! no more.

There is a mountain-pass across the Fjeld from hence to Roldal, and, as I mounted it next morning by the side of one of the feeders of the lake cascading grandly down, I had a fine view of this noble piece of water. After a stiff walk of three hours and a half we arrive at the summit of the *col*, and passing the rnan, or cairn, which marks the highest point, looked down upon the pretty Roldal water sunk deep among the mountains, with the snowfields of the Storfond gleaming in the distance.

Here we met a mournful cavalcade. First came a sickly-looking man riding, and another horse following loaded with luggage, while a spruce old dame and a handsome lad walked in the rear. This is a rich bonder from Botne below, who is troubled with a spinal complaint, and after enduring frightful tortures, is on his travels in search of a doctor. Horror of horrors! I felt it running

cold down my back as I heard of it. Imagine a man with a diseased spine riding down a Norwegian mountain. Heaven help him! The lad hails me, and asks if I know where a doctor is to be found. I recommend Stavanger, sixty miles off—much of which distance, however, may be travelled by water —in preference to Lillesand, a small place nearer.

It was a great relief, after walking in the intense heat, to boat across Roldal lake, under the shade of the mountains, the air deliciously cooled by the glacier water, which, though milky in colour, did not prevent me catching some trout. The poor fellow, my boatman, has a swollen hand and wrist of some weeks' standing; I recommend porridge poultice as hot as possible, and a douche of icy water afterwards. Formerly, instead of this simple remedy, it would have been necessary to do "some great thing." Abana and Pharpar alone would have sufficed. I allude to the miraculous image which used to be kept in the old church at Roldal, now pulled down. On the Eve of St. John it used to sweat, and people came from far and near to apply the exudation to their bodily ailments.

Like Dr. Steer's opodeldoc, it never failed to effect a cure.

As we approach the other end of the lake, a little modern church rises on the shore, while an amphitheatre of cultivated ground, dotted here and there by log-houses, slopes gently upwards towards the grey rocky mountains behind, which afford pasturage for herds of tame reindeer. In the distance may be discerned at intervals a winding path. This path, which at present is only practicable for horses, crosses the summit level of the Hardanger mountains. At Gugaard it becomes a carriage-road, and thence passes on through Vinje to the part of Thelemarken visited by me last year. The Storthing have long been talking of completing the post-road from Gugaard to Busteten, on the Sör Fjord, a branch of the Hardanger; but hitherto it is confined to talk, although, at present, the only way of getting from the Hardanger district to Kongsberg and the capital, is either to go the long route by the sea round the Naze, or up to Leirdalsören, where the high road commences. Formerly Roldal parish was annexed to Suledal, thirty miles off, but it has

lately been separated, and has the advantage of a resident clergyman, and service every Sunday.

Sending my effects to the Lehnsman's, where I purposed stopping the night, I went up the hill to call upon his reverence. He was out, so the girl went to fetch him, taking care to lock the house-door and put the key in her pocket. Presently a vinegar-faced, Yankee-looking young man, with white neckcloth, light coat, and pea-green waistcoat, with enormous flowers embroidered on it, and sucking a cigar the colour of pig-tail, approached. There was a Barmecide look about him, which was not promising, and his line of action tallied exactly with his physiognomy. He stood before the house-door, but made no effort to open it, and there was a repelling uncommunicative way about him, which determined me to retire the moment I had obtained the information I stood in need of.

As I had landed from the boat, a ragged square-built little fellow, with gipsy countenance, had offered to carry my luggage, seventy pounds in weight, over the mountain to Odde, thirty miles distance. Showing me a miserable little hut, he

told me he was very poor, and had five children with no bread to eat, while his wife, a tidy-looking woman carrying a bundle of sticks, chimed in with his entreaties, and thanked me warmly for the gift of the few fish I had caught. I was quite willing to hire him, and had come to the priest, to whom he referred me, for some account of his trustworthiness and capabilities.

"Yes," said his reverence, "he is able to carry that weight; he carried for me more than double as much when I came hither from Odde, and that's much more uphill (imod)."

"Yes," said I; "but I travel quick, and I don't wish to use a man as a beast of burden."

"He lives by carrying burdens. And what do you want, Knut, for the job?"

"A dollar."

"That's too much."

I did not think so, and the bargain was struck, and I took leave of the vinegar-cruet, who was said o be a chosen vial of pûlpit declamation.

What a set of bores or burrs my host the Lehnsman and his family were. They would not let me

alone in the loft, which was frightfully hot, and with no openable window. Up tramped first the old man, with half-a-dozen loutish sons, then followed a hobbling old beldam, leaning on a stick, and attended by Brida, a young peasant lass, the only redeeming feature in the group. Fancy arriving at a place dog-tired, and a dozen people surrounding you in the foreground, and asking a hundred questions, with a perspective of white heads bobbing about, and appearing and disappearing through the doorway in the middle distance.

My only chance was my pencil; that is the weapon to repel such intruders. Not that I used it aggressively, as those hopeful students did their styles (see Fox's *Martyrs*), digging the sharp points into their Dominie's body. Taking out my sketch-book, I deliberately singled out one of the phalanx, and commenced transferring his proportions to the paper. This manœuvre at once routed the assailants, and they retired. Before long, however, the old gent stole in, and prowled stealthily around the fortress before he summoned it to surrender. I parried all his questions, and he

departed. His place was then supplied by his eldest son, who was equally unsuccessful, but whom I made useful in boiling some water for tea. The only thing approaching to a tea-pot was a shallow kettle, a foot in diameter. The butter of Roldal is celebrated, and compared to the Herregaard butter of Denmark, but the pile of it brought in by the landlord's son, on a lordly dish, was stale and nauseous. As nothing was to be got out of me, he, too, disappeared, and I was left in peace and quietness. Another yet! Horrible sight! the old Hecate herself again rises into the loft—not one of "the soft and milky rabble" of womankind, spoken of by the poet, but a charred and wrinkled piece of humanity—all shrivelled and toothless, came and stood over me as I sat at meat.

"Who are you? You *shall* tell me. Whence do you come from?"

"Christiansand."

"But are you Baarneföd (born) there?"

At the same time she hobbled to a great red box, with various names painted on it, and as a kind of bait, I suppose, produced a quaint silver

spoon for my use, which she poised suspiciously in her hand like a female Euclio, as if she was fearful I should swallow it.

But I was much too tired to respond; and at last, seeing nothing was to be got out of me, she crawled away, and I was speedily between the woollen coverlets—sheets there were none. By five A.M the gipsy Knut was in attendance, with a small son to help him; and on a most inspiriting morning we skirted along the lake, and began to mount the heights. The haze that still hung about the water, and filled the shadowy nooks between the mountains, lent an ineffable grandeur to them, which the mid-day atmosphere, when the sun is high in heaven, fails to communicate.

Leaving my coolies to advance up the track, I thought I would take a short cut to the summit of the pass, when I came unexpectedly upon a lake, which stretched right and left, and compelled me to retrace my steps for some distance. As I scrambled along fallen rocks, my leg slipped through a small opening into a perfect cavern. Thank God, the limb was not broken, as the guide

could not have heard my cries, and I might have ceased to be, and become a tissue of dry bones (*de mortuo nil nisi bonum*), long before I could have been discovered. That old raven overhead there, who gave that exulting croak as I fell, you're reckoning this time without your host. See, I have got my leg out of the trap; and off we hurry from the ill-omened spot. Those ravens are said to be the ghosts of murdered persons who have been hidden away on the moors by their murderers, and have not received Christian burial.

What a delicious breeze refreshed me as I stood, piping hot, on the top of the pass. Half-an-hour of this let loose upon London would be better than flushing the sewers. It was genuine North Sea, iced with passing over the vast white Folgefond. There it lies full in front of us, like a huge winding-sheet, enwrapping the slumbering Jotuns, those Titanic embodiments of nature in her sternest and most rugged mood, with which the imagination of the sons of Odin delighted to people the fastnesses of their adopted home.

As we had ascended, the trees had become,

both in number and size, small by degrees and beautifully less, until they ceased altogether, and the landscape turned into nothing but craggy, sterile rockscape. This order of things as we now descended was inverted, and I was not sorry to get once more into the region of verdure.

At length we arrive at Seligenstad, where, to avoid the crowd of questioners, I sit down on a box, in the passage, to the great astonishment of the good folks. The German who has preceded me has been more communicative: "He is from Hanover; is second master in a Gymnasium; is thirty years old; has so many dollars a year; is married; and expects a letter from his wife at Bergen."

When the buzz had subsided, and nobody is looking, one girl, dressed in the Hardanger costume, viz., a red bodice and dark petticoat, with masculine chemise, but with the addition of a white linen cap, shaped like a nimbus by means of a concealed wooden-frame, comes and sits on a milk-pail beside me. At my request she sings a lullaby or two. One of them ran thus:—

Heigho and heigho!
My small one, how are you?
Indeed but you're brave and well:
The rain it pours,
And the hurricane roars,
But my bairn it sleeps on the fell.

I vow that the touching address of the daughter of Acrisius to her nursling, in the Greek Anthology, never sounded so sweetly to me in my schoolboy days, as did the lullaby I had just heard. I'm sure the girl will make a good mamma. Perhaps she's thinking of the time when that will happen.

Another—

My roundelay, it runs as nimble
As the nag o'er the ice without a stumble;
My roundelay can turn with a twirl,
As quick as the lads on snow-shoes whirl.

A strapping peasant lad, joining our *tête-à-tête*, I bantered him on the subject of sweethearts.

"You've got one. Now, tell me what you sing to her."

With a look of *nonchalance*, which thinly covered over an abundance of sheepishness, the

rustic swain pooh-poohed the idea, and, in defiance, sang the following:—

To wed in a hurry, of that oh! beware;
You had far better drag on alone;
What, tho' she be fair, a wife brings much care,
With marriage all merriment's flown.

Well, suppose you have land, and flocks and herds too,
But at Yule, when they're all in the byre,
It perhaps happen can, that you've scarce a handfu'
Of fodder the cattle to cheer.

"That's very fine, no doubt," interrupted the girl; "but he's got a kjærste (sweetheart) for all that, and I'll tell you what he sings to her:—

Oh! hear me, my pretty maid,
What I will say to thee,
I've long thought, but was afraid,
I would woo thee,
Wilt thou have me?

Meadows I have so fair,
And cattle and corn good store,
Of dollars two or three pair,
Then don't say me nay, I implore.

The girl had completely turned the tables on the said flippant young fellow, who, by his looks, abundantly owned the soft impeachment.

Taking leave of these good folks, I pursued my downward course along the river, which was, however, hidden by trees and rocks. Suddenly, however, we got a sight of the torrent in an unexpected manner. The earth at our feet had sunk into a deep, well-like hole, leaving, however, between it and the stream, a great arch of living rock, crowned with trees like the Prebischthor in the Saxon Switzerland, only smaller. Soon after this, we pass a picturesque bridge (Horbro), where the river roars through a deep and very narrow chasm, terrible to look down into; and, after some hours' walking, get the first peep into the placid lake of Hildal, with two great waterfalls descending the opposite mountain, as if determined to give *éclat* to the river's entrance therein. Visions of Bavarian beer, fresh meat, clean sheets, &c., crowd upon my imagination, as, after catching some trout in crossing the lake, we land on the little isthmus which separates the sheet of fresh water from the beautiful salt-water Sörfjord; and with light foot I hasten down to Mr. M——'s, the merchant of Odde. The situation is one of the grandest in

Norway. The mighty Hardanger Fjord, after running westward out of the Northern Ocean for about eighty miles, suddenly takes a bend south, and forms the Sör (South) Fjord, which is nearly thirty miles long. At the very extreme end of this glorious water defile I now stood. To my left shoot down the sloping abutments of the mountain plateau, on which lies the vast snow-field called the Folgefond; they, with their flounce-like bands of trees, first fir, then birch, and above this mere scrub, are now immersed in shadow, blending in the distance with the indigo waters of the Fjord. But further out to seaward, as we glance over the dark shoulder of one of these natural buttresses, rises a swelling mound of white, like the heaving bosom of some queenly beauty robed in black velvet. That is a bit of "Folgo" yet glowing with the radiance of the setting sun. As I stood gazing at this wonderful scene—the snow part of it reminding me of the unsullied Jungfrau, as seen from Interlacken, only that there the water, which gives such effect to this scene, is absent—I saw a man rise from behind a

stranded boat in front of me. He was a German painter, and had been transferring to his canvas the very sight I had been looking on.

"Eine wunderschöne Aussicht, Mein Herr," remarked I.

"Unvergleichbar! We've nothing like it even in Switzerland," said he.

With this observation I think I can safely leave the scenery in the reader's hands.

"That church, there," said the German, pointing to a little ancient edifice of stone, with mere slits of windows, "is said to have been built by your countrymen, as well as those of Kinservik and Ullensvang, further down the fjord. They had a great timber trade, according to tradition, with this part of the country. But, to judge from that breastwork and foss yonder, the good people of the valley were favoured at times with other visits besides those of timber merchants."

CHAPTER XIII.

Author visits a glacier—Meets with two compatriots—A good year for bears—The judgment of snow—Effects of parsley fern on horses—The advantage of having a shadow—Old friends of the hill tribe—Skeggedals foss — Fairy strings — The ugliest dale in Norway — A photograph of omnipotence — The great Bondehus glacier—Record of the mysterious ice period—Guide stories—A rock on its travels.

NEXT day I went across the Hildal Lake to visit a glacier of which I had got a glimpse the evening before. It then seemed a couple of miles off; but I never was more taken in in judging of distance before—such is the uncommon clearness of the atmosphere and the gigantic scale of objects in this country. After a sweltering walk, however, of nearly three hours, I at last stood at the spot, where a torrent of water, the exact colour of that perennial sewer that comes to the light of day, and diffuses its fragrance just below London Bridge, rushed out of an archway of the purest azure, setting me a moralizing about deceit-

ful appearances, and so forth. My boy-guide halted the while at a respectful distance from the convulsed mass of ice.

"Do let me go back," he had apostrophized me; "I am so frightened, I am. It is sure to fall on us."

And it was only by yielding to his cowardly entreaties that I prevented him from imitating the trickling ice, and being dissolved in tears.

Close to the ice grew white and red clover, yellow trefoil, two kinds of sorrel, and buttercups. This fertility on the edge of a howling desert had been taken advantage of, for, as I moved my eye to the opposite cliff from taking a look at the sun, who had just hidden his scorching glare behind the tips of the glacier, I descried several men and women busily engaged, at an enormous height, making hay on a slope of great steepness. As we descended, a noise, as of a salute of cannon, greeted my ears. The above sewer, which descends with most prodigious force, had set agoing some stones apparently of great size, which thundered high even above the roar of the waters, making the rocks and nodding groves rebellow again.

Next day I had determined to cross "Folgo" to the Mauranger Fjord, but the clouds hanging over him forbid the attempt.

That evening it cleared up, and two compatriots from the Emerald Isle arriving by water, we agreed to join forces the next day.

On the 20th of August, at an early hour, we started with two guides, one Ole Olsen Bustetun, and Jörgen Olsen Præstergaard. The latter was a very grave-looking personage, with a blue face and red-tipped nose, which, however, told untrue tales.

"Well, Jörgen," said I, "how are you off for bears this year?"

"Hereabouts, not so bad; but yonder at Ulsvig they are very troublesome. It was only the other day that Ulsvig's priest was going to one of his churches, when a bear attacked him. By good luck he had his hound with him—a very big one it is—and it attacked the bear behind, and bothered him, and so the priest managed to escape."

"Aren't there some old sagas about the Folgefond?" asked I.

"To be sure. I know one, but it is not true."

"True or not true, let me hear it."

"Well, then, it is said among the bonders that once on a time under all this mountain of ice and snow there was a valley, called Folgedal, with no less than seven parishes in it. But the dalesmen were a proud and ungodly crew, and God determined to destroy them as He did Sodom and Gomorrah—not by fire, however, but by snow. So He caused it to snow in the valley for ten weeks running. As you may suppose, the valley got filled up. The church spires were covered, and not a living soul survived. And from that day to this the ice and snow has gone on increasing. They also say that in olden days there used to be a strange sight of birds of all colours, white, and black, and green, and red, and yellow, fluskering about over the snow, and people would have it that these were nothing but the spirits of the inhabitants lingering about the place of their former abodes."

"That's a strange story, no doubt," said I.

"And, now I think of it," continued Jörgen, "I've heard old men say that this tale of the snowing-up must be true, for, now and then, when there has been a flom (flood), pieces of hewn

timber, as if they had belonged to a house, and household implements, such as copper kettles, have been brought down by the stream that comes out of Overhus Glacier.

"Now and then, too, the traveller over Folgo is said to hear strange noises, as of church bells ringing and dogs barking. But the fact is, there's something so lonely and grewsome about the Fond, and the ice is so apt to split and the snow to fall, that no wonder people get such-like fancies into their heads."

As we ascend I see tufts of a dark green herb growing in the crevices of the grey rocks.

"Ah! that's spraengehesten (horse burster)," said Jörgen. "If a horse eats of this a stoppage of the bowels immediately takes place. A horse at Berge, below there, was burst in this way not long ago."

[The reader may remember that a similar account was given me last year on the Sogne-fjeld].*

* It is singular that two peasants in different parts of the country should have made this statement, which seems after all to be based on error: for the plant was nothing but our Rock-brake, or parsley fern (Allosurus crispus),

We had now emerged from the thickets, and, after crossing a *mauvais pas* of slippery rock, touched the snow after four hours' hard walking. The glare of the sun on the snow was rather trying to the eyes. I congratulated myself that I was not shadowless, like Peter Schlemil, as it was a great relief to me to cast my vision on my own lateral shadow as we proceeded. It was first-rate weather, and the air being northerly, the snow was not very slushy. The German painter ought to be here. He told me his *forte* is winter landscape.

"Now," said the grave-faced Jörgen, who was at bottom a very good sort of intelligent fellow, "look due east, sir, over where the Sör fjord lies. Yonder is the Foss (waterfall) of Skeggedal, or Tussedal, as some folks call it."

As I cast my eyes eastward, I saw the highest top of the Hardanger Fjeld, which I traversed last year; my old friend Harteigen very conspicuous with his quaint square head rising to the height of

which is not generally supposed to possess any noxious qualities.

5400 feet, while his grey sides contrasted with the Storfond to the south and the dazzling white Tresfond and Jöklen to the north.

Straight in a line between myself and Harteigen I now discerned a perpendicular strip of gleaming white chalked upon a stupendous wall of dark rock. That is Skeggedals foss. It falls several hundred feet perpendicularly, but no wonder it looks a mere thread from here, for it is more than fourteen miles off as the crow flies.

"There are three falls at the head of the valley," continued Jörgen. "Two of them cross each other at an angle quite wonderful to see. They are called Tusse-straenge (Fairy strings)."

Wonderful music, thought I, must be given forth by those fairy strings, mayhap akin to

> "The unmeasured notes
> Of that strange lyre whose strings
> The genii of the breezes sweep."

"Tussedal is a terribly stügt (ugly) dale," went on Jörgen, "so narrow, and dark, and deep. A little below those three waterfalls the river enters into the ground, and disappears for some distance,

and then comes out again. We call that the Swelge (swallow). Just below that there is a great stone that has fallen across the chasm. It's just like a bridge. I've stood on that stone and looked down many, many ells deep into the water boiling below. Ay! that's an ugly dale—a very ugly dale. It's not to be matched in Norway. You ought to have gone to see it; but now I think of it, it's difficult to get to the falls, for there is a lake to cross, and I think the old boat is stove in now."

After passing one or two crevasses (spraekker), which become dangerous when the fresh snow comes and covers them over, we at length arrive at the first skiaer (skerry), a sort of Grand Mulets of bare jagged crag, on which the snow did not seem to rest. After lunching here, and drinking a mixture of brandy and ice, we descend a slope of snow by the side of a deep torquoise-coloured gutter, of most serpentine shape, brimful of dashing water. Just beyond this a sight met our eyes never to be effaced from my memory Far to the westward the ocean is distinctly visible through a

film of haze rising from the snow, just thick enough, like the crape on those veiled Italian statues, to enhance its beauty. Between us and the sea, purple ranges of mountains intersect each other, the furthermost melting into the waves. At right angles to these ranges is the Mauranger Fjord, to which we have to descend. There it lies like a mere trough of ink, opening gradually into the main channel of the branching Hardanger, with the island of Varald lying in the centre of it. Over this to the north-west lies Bergen. To the southward, skirting the Mauranger, is a cleft rock, like the Brèche de Roland in the Pyrenées, while between it and us may be seen the commencement of the great Bondehus glacier.

Look! the smooth, sloping, snow-covered ice has suddenly got on the *qui vive*. It's already on the incline, no drag will stop it; see how it begins to rise into billows and fall into troughs, like the breakers approaching the sea-shore; and yonder it disappears from view between the adamantine buttresses that encroach upon its sweep. To our right is another pseudo glacier hanging from a

higher ascent like a blue ball-cloak from the shoulder of a muslin-frocked damsel.

The *rochers montonnées* on which we stand tell tales of that mysterious ice-period when the glacier ground everything down with its powerful emery, while by a curious natural convulsion, a crevasse as broad and nearly as deep as the Box cutting—not of ice but of rock, as if the very rocks had caught the infection, and tried to split in glacial fashion—strikes down to a small black lake dotted with white ice floes.

It was indeed a wondrous scene. As we looked at it, one of my companions observed, one could almost imagine this was the exceeding high mountain whence Satan shewed our Saviour all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them. As if to make the thing stranger still, on one of the bleached rocks are carved what one might easily suppose were cabalistic letters, the records of an era obscured in the grey mists of time, but which it is beyond our power to decipher. Above us the sky was cloudless, but wore that dark tinge which as clearly indicates snow beneath as the distant

ice-blink of the Arctic regions tells tales to the voyager of a frozen ocean ahead.

"Now we're off the Fond," said Jörgen. "You laughed at me when I asked you if you had a compass. We've made short work of it to-day, but you don't know what it is when there is a skodda (scud) over Folgo. Twenty-five years ago five Englishmen, who tried to come over with five horses, lost their way in the mist, and had hard work to get back. Why it's only fourteen days since that I started with three other guides and four Englishmen, but we were forced to return. At this end of the passage there is one outlet, and if you miss that it is impossible to get down into the Mauranger."

I found he was right; for, after worming our way for a space through a hotch-potch of snow and rocks, we suddenly turned a sharp corner, and stood in a gateway invisible a moment before, from whence a ladder of stone reached down to the hamlet of Ovrehus, at the head of the Fjord, four thousand feet below us.

"Four years ago," said Jörgen, "I guided a

German state-councillor across the Fond. How he did drink brandviin! I think it was to give him courage. He had a bottle full when he started, and he kept pouring the spirits on to lumps of sugar, and sucking them till the bottle got quite empty and he quite drunk. We could not get him a step further than this, and night was coming on. I had to go down to Ovrehus, and get four men with lanterns, and at last we got him down at two o'clock in the morning."

Jörgen thought the traveller was a German, but I suspect if the real truth were known, it must have been our friend the Danish Count, whose propensity for drink and other peculiarities have been recorded in the *Oxonian in Norway*. The descent was uncommonly steep, even in the opinion of one of my companions, who had ascended the Col du Géant, and the stiffest passes in the Tyrol.

After descending in safety, we entered a belt of alder copse-wood. In one part of this the ground had been ploughed up, and the trees torn away and smashed right and left, as if some huge

animal had rushed through it, or rather, as if two or three Great Western locomotives had run off the line and bolted across country. What could it be! The gash, I found, reached to a torrent of fierce snow-water, in the centre of which a rock of a great many tons weight had come to an anchor. This was the *corpus delicti*. Looking at the cliffs, I could discern several hundred feet above me the mark of a recent dislocation, whence the monster had started. The rupture had occurred only two or three days before. What a grand sight it must have been.

CHAPTER XIV.

Three generations—Dangers of the Folgo—Murray at fault—Author takes boat for the entrance of the Bondehus Valley—The king of the waterfall—More glacier paths—An extensive ice-house—These glorious palaces—How is the harvest?—Laxe-stie—Struggle-stone—To Vikör—Östudfoss, the most picturesque waterfall in Norway—An eternal crystal palace—How to earn a pot of gold—Information for the *Morning Post*—A parsonage on the Hardanger—Steamers for the Fjords—Why living is becoming dearer in Norway—A rebuke for the travelling English—Sunday morning—Peasants at church—Female head-dresses—A Norwegian church service—Christening—Its adumbration in heathen Norway—A sketch for Washington Irving.

AFTER a very sharp walk of eleven hours in all, we entered a small farm-house. No less than eighteen persons, from the sucking infant to the old woman of eighty-four, surrounded us, as we dipped our wooden spoons into a round tub of sour milk, the only refreshment the place afforded. Red stock-

ings, and blue caps, with an inner one of white, and red bodices, were the chief objects that caught my eye. The ventilation soon became so defective from the crowd, that I got up and succeeded in pushing open a wooden trap-door in the centre of the roof by a pole attached to it. The apartment, in fact, was one of the old "smoke rooms," described elsewhere, and the orifice, the ancient chimney and window in one, which had been superseded by a modern window and chimney in two. "That's an awkward place to cross, is that Folgo," said a big fellow to me. "My grandfather, who lived in Sörfjord, where you come from, was to marry a lass at Ovrehus here. On the day before the wedding he started, with thirteen others, to cross Folgo. Night came, but the party did not arrive. But no harm was done, you see, sir; for I'm his grandson, and if he had been lost I should not have seen the light. [This pleasantry seemed to tickle the crowd.] They did, however, stop all night on the snow, and it was not till next day that they got down."

From these people I find that there is no foundation for the statement in "Murray," that a band

of peasants lost their lives in crossing the snow. The nearest approach to an accident is that detailed above.

Next morning we take boat for the entrance of the Bondehus valley, which debouches on the Fjord half a mile from this, and opposite to which, across the Fjord, is a place called Fladebo, from which Forbes ascended the Folgefond by a much easier path than that we had taken. Indeed, as we loll easily in the boat, and look back at the descent of yesterday, it seems astonishing how we ever could get down at all. Landing at Bondehus, after an hour's walk up the valley, which was occupied for some distance by meadows, in which peasants were at work making hay, we reached a lake, across which we row. By the stream, which here shot into the further side of the lake, there were a couple of water ouzels, bobbing about.

"Ay, that's an Elv-Konge (river king), or, as some call him, Foss-Konge (king of the waterfall)," said our guide.

In spite of the apparent proximity of the glacier,

it still took us several minutes' climb before we reached its foot.

Truth to tell, the bad fare exhibited by Margareta Larsdatter Ovrehus, was bad travelling on, and made me rather exact in distances to-day. Passing through a birch-grove, full of blue-berries and cloud-berries of delicious taste, we found the glacier only about thirty yards in front of us. The shingly space which intervened was traversed by four or five breastworks of loose sand and stones, about ten feet in height. These are the moraines left by the retreating glacier, so that at one time the ice and the birch-copse must have touched. Indeed, on either side of the glacier the trees may be seen holding their ground close by the ice, loth, apparently, to be separated from their opposite brethren by the intervention of such an unceremonious intruder.

We scrambled over the loose ramparts, and going close under the glacier where a muddy stream came forth, we discovered a huge cave, cut out of a blue wall of ice, some sixty feet in height. Some of the superincumbent mass had evidently just fallen in,

causing, perhaps, the roar which we had heard as we ascended the valley. It was rather dangerous work entering the cavern, as another fall might take place, and I had no ambition to be preserved after the manner of the Irish salmon for the London market. But it was not every day that one is privileged to enter such a magnificent hall, so in I went alone. It was lit, too, by a lantern in the roof, in other words, by a perfectly circular hole, drilled through the crown of the arch, through which I saw the sky overhead. Nothing could exceed the intense depth of blue in this cool recess.

But let us come and look a little more at the stupendous scene above. Far up skyward, at a distance of perhaps six English miles, though it looks about one, is the pure cold level snow of the Folgefond, glistening between two mighty horns of shivered rock, that soar still higher heavenward.

These two portals contract the passage through which pours the great ice ocean; so that the monstrous billows are upheaved on the backs of one

another in their struggle onward, and tower up into various forms.

"By Jove," said one of my companions, "it looks just like a city on a hill side, Lyons, for instance. Look yonder, there are regular church towers and domes, and pinnacles and spires, and castellated buildings, only somehow etherialized. Why, there's the arch of a bridge, you can see right under it at the buildings beyond."

"If Macaulay's New Zealander were there," remarked I, "he would behold a grander sight than ever he will on London Bridge when the metropolis of the world is in ruin."

"Ruin!" rejoined the poetical son of Erin, "that's already at work here. Look at this hall of ice which has come down to-day. Ah! it's quite melancholy to think how all this splendid vision, these cloud-capped towers, these glorious palaces of silver and aquamarine, are moving on insensibly, day by day, to their destruction, and will melt away, not into air, but into dirty water, by the time they reach the spot where we're standing."

We had some hours of boating before nightfall, so that we were forced to tear ourselves from the scene, not forgetting to have a good look first at a feature in it not yet mentioned—a magnificent waterfall, which descended from the cliffs on the left. So now adieu to the mountains. I shall climb no more this year. Positively I feel as downcast as the hot-brained youth of Macedon when no more worlds were left for him to conquer.

We were soon at the farm-house near the sea, where Ragnhild Bondehus, with her red stockings, blue polka-jacket and red boddice, looking quite captivating, albeit threescore-and-ten, put before us porridge and goat's milk, which we devoured with keen glacial appetite.

"How is the harvest looking where you came from?" asked she, with anxious looks. This was a question that had been frequently asked me this summer.

"Very good all over Europe."

"To God be praise and thanks!" she ejaculated. "We shan't have corn then too dear to buy. We

did hear that there was no grain sown in Denmark this year; that's not true, is it?"

The old lady derived no small comfort from my assurance that this must be a fabrication of some interested person.

Our boatmen landing with their great provision boxes to dine at the rocky point where we reach the main Hardanger, we land and examine one of those singular "fixings" for catching salmon, called a laxe-stie, or salmon ladder. It consists of a high stage, projecting on a light scaffolding into the water. In front of this, under the water, is an oblong square of planks, painted white, from twenty to thirty feet long and six broad. This is kept at the bottom by great stones. Beyond this, and parallel with the shore, several yards out, is a fixed wall-net, to guide the fish into a drag-net, one end of which is fastened to the shore, the other sloped out to seaward. The dark-backed salmon, which in certain places are fond of hugging the shore, as they make for the rivers to spawn, swim over the white board, and are at once seen by the watcher perched on the stage above, and

he speedily drags in the net set at right angles to the shore, with the fish secure in the bag. In some places the rock close by is also painted white* to attract the fish, who take it for a waterfall. The man lodges in a little den close by, his only escape from hence being most likely his boat, drawn into a crevice of the sheer rocks around him. Sometimes from twelve to twenty fish are taken in this manner in a day. St. Johann's-tid (Midsummer) is the best time for taking them. The season is now over, and the solitary sentinel off to some other occupation.

According to the boatmen's account, who, however, are very lazy fellows, the stream is hard against us; indeed, it always sets out in the Hardanger from the quantity of river water that comes into it.

* The Chinese have a somewhat similar device. "A strip of white canvas is stretched slanting in the water, which allures or alarms the fish, and has the strange effect (but they were Chinese fish) of inducing them to leap over the boat. But a net placed over the boat from stem to stern intersects their progress, and they are caught."—Fortune's *Travels in China.*

"Ah!" said Ole, "that's called Streit-Steen (Struggle-Stone). Satan once undertook to tow a Jagt from Bergen up the Hardanger. He had tough work of it, but he got on till he reached that stone; then he was dead beat, and banned and cursed dreadfully. It was he who called it Streit-Steen."

The less said about the poisonous beer and bad food at Jondal, where we slept that night, the better.

We cross over, early next morning, to Vikör. The elder boatman, seventy-nine years old, was a strange little, dried-up creature, dressed in a suit of dark-green, the ancient costume of Jondal. One of the party told him if he were to see him in the gloaming he should take him for a Tuss. Anyhow he had a great aversion to the priest, against whose profits he declaimed loudly.

"Only to think," said he, "the parson got tithe of butter and calf-skins—yes, actually got a hundred and fifteen calf-skins every year, worth half-a-crown each, from Jondal alone!"

How beautiful the placid Fjord looked as we

pulled up the smiling little estuary to Vikör, and gradually opened behind us the end of the great Folgefond peninsula!

Near Vikör is the famed Östudfoss, said to be the most picturesque waterfall in Norway. At all events, it is a very eccentric one. The stream, which at times is of immense volume, shooting from the well shrubbed cliff above, which projects considerably, makes a clear jump over a plot of green turf, on which a dozen people or more could stand without being wetted; in fact, right inside the fall. While I stood within this crystal palace, one of my Hibernian friends, who had approached the spot by another route, clambering up the rocks, mounted on to the platform,—

"Faith, and I've earned the pot of gold!" exclaimed he, breathless with exertion.

"How so?"

"Why, did ye never hear the proverb—'If you catch hold of the rainbow you will get a pot of gold?' Ye never saw such a thing; just below there, where the stream makes a shoot, I put me hand right into a rainbow—yes, clean into it."

On our return we overtook a number of women, dressed in their best. The inventory is as follows: A lily-white, curiously-plaited head-dress, the "getting-up" of which must take an infinity of time and trouble; red or parti-coloured bodice, black gown, and stockings of the same colour, cut off at the ankle, while on the foot were white socks with red edging, and shoes with high leather insteps, such as were worn in the days of the Cavaliers. By their side were a lot of children, also in their best attire.

"Where are you all going to this fine day?"

"It's vaccination (bole, an Icelandic word) day, and we are all going to meet the doctor, who will be here from Strandebarm by two o'clock. We must all of us get a bolen-attest (certificate of vaccination). That's the King's order."

The merchant's establishment supplied us with some tolerable Madeira wherewith to drink to our next merry meeting, and my Irish friends, who were pressed for time, took boat that afternoon for Graven.

That evening and the next day (Sunday) I spent

under the hospitable roof of the parson of the district. His house is beautifully situate on a nook of the Hardanger, with a distant view of the Folgefond.

"Ah!" said he, "it wont be so difficult to explore the beauties of our Fjords for the future. Our Storthing, I see, by the last Christiania papers, has voted several thousand dollars for setting up steamers on this and the Romsdal Fjord, which are to stop at the chief places. The abrogation of Cromwell's Navigation Act has done great things for Norge's commerce, and brought much money into the country."

"Norway is getting richer," said I, "no doubt, if one is to judge from the increase in the price of living."

"That may be caused in some measure by the increase of capital, but the chief cause is another, though it, too, lies at England's door. We used to get a great deal of butter, cheese, meal, and meat from Jutland, but now, since the English steamers run regularly thither, and carry off all the surplus provisions, that source of supply is stopped, and the articles of food are dearer."

"That would not affect us much up here," put in the Frua (priest's lady); "No, no; it is the travelling English that do the mischief. Last year, sir, when I and my husband went up to see the Vöring foss, everything was so dreadfully dear, we said we must never venture out on another summer trip. And then, only think, there was an English lord there with his yacht, who saw a pig running on the shore, and said he would have the pig for dinner cost what it might. It was quite a small one, and they charged him six dollars. Yes, it positively makes us tremble, for you know we parson's wives have not a great deal of money, though we have good farms."

"At all events, I can't be charged with this sort of folly," said I; "for I resisted the extortions of the merchant at Jondal."

"What, he! he is one of the Lesere, and is considered a very respectable man."

"But will play the rogue when he thinks it wont be talked of," rejoined I. "Shams and realities are wonderfully alike. Do you know, even that black-coated biped, the ostrich, can make a roar just like a lion's?"

As I crossed over from my bed-room next morning to the main building, I found the grass-plot in front of the house thronged by peasants who had come to church, while in the centre of them was the priest in his Lutheran cloak and elaborate frill. The washing and starching of one of these ruffs costs a shilling. The widow of a clergyman in Bergen is a great adept in getting them up, and it is no uncommon thing for them to come to her by steamer from a distance of one hundred and forty English miles.

The congregation were in church when I entered with the ladies. We sat altogether in a square pew on a level with the chancel dais. This mingling of the sexes, however, was not permitted, of course, among the primitive bonders: the men being on one side of the interior, the women on the other, reminding me of the evening parties in a famous University town. The former wore most of them short seamen's jackets, though a few old peasants adhered to the antique green coat of singular cut, while their grey locks, which were parted in the centre of the forehead, streamed patriarchally over their shoulders, shading their strongly-marked

countenances. The female side was really very picturesque. The head-dress is a white kerchief, elaborately crimped or plaited, but by some ingenious contrivance shaped in front somewhat like the ladies' small bonnets of the present day, with one corner falling gracefully down behind, like the topping of the Carolina ducks on the water in St. James's Park. Another part of this complicated piece of linen, which is not plaited, covers the forehead like a frontlet, almost close down to the eyebrows, so that at a distance they looked just like so many nuns. Nevertheless, they were the married women of the audience. The spinsters' head-dress was more simple. They wore no cap at all. The back hair, which is braided in two bands or tails with an intermixture of red tape, is brought forward on either side of the head and round the temples just on a level with the front hair. For my part, I much admired the clean and classic cut which some of their heads exhibited in consequence. Most of the females wore tight-fitting scarlet bodices edged with green.

On either side of their bosom were six silver

hooks, to hold a cross chain of the same metal. The snow-white sleeves of the chemise formed a conspicuous feature in the sparkling parterre. One woman wore a different cap from the rest: its upper part was shaped just like a glory, or nimbus; this is done by inserting within a light piece of wood of that shape. Her ornaments, too, were not plain silver, but gilt. She was from Strandebarm, which I passed yesterday on the Fjord, the scene of a celebrated national song—"Bonde i Bryllups Gaarden."

Much psalm-singing prevailed out of Bishop Kingo, of Funen's, psalm-book. The priest then read the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel, with the traditional, I suppose, but what sounded to me very frightful, intonation. The sermon was not extempore.

"He is a tolerable preacher," said a peasant, with quite the "Habitans in sicco" tone of criticism, "but it is out of a book, and not out of his hoved (head), like priest So-and-so, on the other side of the Fjord."

Very small and very red babies, not many hours

old,* I believe—such is the almost superstitious eagerness with which these good folk rush to have that sacred rite administered—were now brought to be christened. No font was visible; there was, however, an angel suspended by a cord from the roof, with deep, flesh-coloured legs and arms, and a gilt robe. In its right hand was a bowl, in its left a book. The glocker, or clerk, a little man in a blue sailor's jacket, here dispatched a girl for some water, which was brought, and poured into the bowl, and the ceremony proceeded; which being concluded, the angel was pulled up again midway to the ceiling.†

* Ström, in his description of Söndmör, relates that in the hard winter of 1755, of thirty children born in the parish of Volden not one lived, solely because they were brought to church directly they were born. But even in the present day in the register books (kirke-bog) notices may be found, such as "Died from being brought too early to church."

† What a curious custom that was of the heathen Norwegian gentle-folk to select a friend to sprinkle their child with water, and give it a name. Thus Sigurd Jarl baptized the infant of Thora, the wife of Harald Harfager, and called it Hacon, although this had nothing to do with Christianity, for this child was afterwards baptized by Athelstan, king

The priest then examined some young men and women, who stood on either side of the aisle, he walking up and down in the intervals of the questions.

As we left the church a characteristic sight presented itself. The churchyard was just the spot in which one would like to be buried—a beautiful freshly-mown sward, sloping down to the sea, and intersected by a couple of brooks brawling down from the hills, extended upwards to the copse of hazel, aspen, ash, and rowan trees that fringed the heights. Under some of these trees sat two or three maidens, looking as stiff as Norwegian peasant girls

of England. The heathen Vikings often pretended to take up Christianity, to renounce it again on the first opportunity. Some of them allowed themselves to be baptized over and over again, merely for the sake of the white garments. Others, who visited Christian lands for the sake of traffic or as mercenary soldiers, used to let themselves be primsegnet (marked with the sign of the cross) without being baptized. Thus they were on a good footing with the foreign Christians, and also with their heathen brethren at home. Many of those who were baptized in all sincerity quite misunderstood the meaning of the rite, thinking that it would release them from evil spirits and gramary.

only can, when busked in their best, and before a crowd of people. Nor was a view of the placid fjord wanting. Look, some of the church-goers are already in their boats, the red bodices and white sleeves conspicuous from afar, while the dripping oars flash in the sun.

Before I took leave of my host and his agreeable family, I presented one of them, who was studying English, with a volume of Bulwer's. The parting glass, of course, past round—a sacred institution, the Afskedsöl of the Sagas.

CHAPTER XV.

Up Steindalen — Thorsten Thormundson — Very near— Author's guide gives him a piece of agreeable information —Crooked paths—Raune bottom—A great ant-hill— Author turns rainbow manufacturer—No one at home— The mill goblin helps author out of a dilemma—A tiny Husman—The dangers attending confirmation in Norway—The leper hospital at Bergen—A melancholy walk —Different forms of leprosy—The disease found to be hereditary—Terrible instances of its effects — Ethnological particulars respecting—The Bergen Museum— Delicate little monsters — Fairy pots — The best bookseller in Bergen—Character of the Danish language— Instance of Norwegian goodnature—New flames and old fiddles.

PASSING the Östudfoss, I struck straight up Steindalen, purposing to pass a place called Teigen, and thence over to the Samnanger Fjord, on my road to Bergen. My hulking guide, Thorsten Thormundson, who, from his height, had been chosen as the front man of his regiment, was but a poor fellow notwithstanding. Having

started later than we ought, we did not reach our destination before dark; and as there was not the smallest vestige of a path through the morasses, we had nearly walked over a cliff into a lake before I was aware of our danger. Luckily, we at last found a cot, and a boy conducted us to our destination.

After an uncomfortable night in a miserable hole of a cottage, I received the agreeable intelligence from my attendant, that he did not know the way any further, and wished to leave me. I informed him that he was quite welcome to do so, but if he did, he must go minus all pay. Upon this, the giant put on a very martial air, but seeing that I was not to be bullied, he prepared for the journey, employing a little maiden to show the way.

It was lucky for us that he did so, for the road was intricate beyond description. The old St. Giles's rookery may serve as a comparison, for want of a better one. Being ahead, I was marching straight forward, when I was recalled by the shrill voice of the bare-footed lassie.

"On there," she said, "was a precipice, over

which Brat-foss poured. There was not foothold for a goat that way. We must try and get through the bog to the left, and so round by Raune bottom.

It was a bottom indeed—cliffs all round, with a treacherous swamp and streams flowing all manner of ways; and then came another descent, the girl leading the pony, and the man pulling hard at its tail by way of drag.

The progress was so slow that I sat down, from time to time, to look about me. In one place I found I was close upon a great ant-hill, a yard high, from whence I perceived a regular line was formed to a neighbouring pine-tree. Up the bole of this a number of these industrious insects were ascending and descending with most exemplary perseverance; though I could not see that, either going or returning, they went otherwise than empty away. I tapped the tree with my stick, when in the twinkling of an eye the ascending and descending squadrons put themselves in a posture of defence; that is to say, each of them threw itself on its back, with its head reared up, and its

tail protruded. In a moment or two, when all was quiet, they, as if by signal, unfixed their bayonets, and recommenced their march.

In another part of our round-about walk I sat down by a stream side, and began making rainbows —yes, rainbows. The sun shone straight up the valley, and the wind was blowing in the same direction. I threw a stone into the clear torrent right among some watching trout, and from the spot where it struck an iris immediately threw out its tricoloured arch athwart the stream, slowly disappearing as the spray, upheld for a second or two by the wind, again subsided on the water.

If my friend the Irishman was to find a pot of gold for getting hold of the rainbow, what luck was in store for me who had actually made one? But the augury was a treacherous one, as we shall see.

Following the stream, which abounded in most captivating looking holes, to my piscatorial eye, we at length reach the farm of Tyssen, whence a beautiful view is obtained across the head of the Samnanger Fjord, with the church of Samnanger lying

under the mountains at the further side. As bad luck would have it, not a soul was at home. The only biped I saw was a statuesque heron standing on a stone by the boat-house. What was to be done? It was my object to obtain a boat here and sail down the Fjord to Hatvigen, where I should be on the great coast road, and not many miles from Bergen.

In this dilemma I descried a little man emerge from the quern, or corn-mill, which stood at the bottom of the stream, near some salmon traps. Perhaps he was only the mill-goblin, but at any rate I would hail him. He took no notice. It must be the Quern knurre. But perhaps the noise of the stream rushing over the rocks into the Fjord drowned my voice, and prevented it being heard; so I and the loutish Thorsten clubbed lungs, when the figure looked round, and immediately walked away. Mr. Thorsten Thormundson wished to be off and leave me to my fate; but I positively forbid him to move until we had discovered some means of conveyance. Presently the small figure re-appeared, accompanied by a female figure. We

hailed again, and this time the mannikin walked to a boat and came across to us. He was a poor peasant from the mountains, who had been buying a sack of corn for four dollars three marks, which would serve him and three mouths till "Michelsmass," and he and his wife had come hither to grind it. The grinding must be finished, and the meal carried up to his distant home before night. Nevertheless he would row me, he said, half a Norwegian mile, where he thought I might get another boatman.

When we had rowed some distance we descry some people making hay on the lea.

"Would they row me?"

"Had no time. But they had a husman in a cottage hard by, who perhaps could do it."

My man landed, and went in search of the said husman. A tiny little man in rags, much smaller than the mill-goblin, with a very tiny voice, and a still more tiny boy, appear and undertake the job, provided I give him time to have some mad (meat) first. Although the boat was very leaky, and though at one place we encountered a good deal of

swell from the effects of a gale out at sea, we manage by night-fall to reach Hatvigen.

On the road we meet a boat full of boys and girls, who have been several miles to be examined by the clergyman for confirmation. We little know the hardships to which these people are subject. Only a few days ago, a boat similarly laden, and on a similar errand, was upset by a sudden squall, and about a dozen unfortunate young people drowned.

Nothing particular caught my eye next day, as I drove along the coast to Bergen, beyond the new telegraphic line which is just completing to Bergen. Some of the posts are the growing pine-trees, which happen to stand ready fixed for the purpose. Another telegraphic cable is making for a part of the coast to advertize people of the approach of the herrings. This will be the future sea-serpent of the country.

I was not sorry to sleep that night under the roof of Madame Sontum at Bergen. Next day, under the auspices of a German physician, I visit the Leper Hospital on the hill above the town.

It is a magnificent building of wood, lately constructed by the State, at an expense of sixty thousand dollars, and kept up from the same source, private donations being unusual. Three years ago the old hospital was burned down at dead of night, and eight unfortunates were consumed. The present spacious building can accommodate two hundred and eighty patients; at present there are only one hundred and eighty inmates. In the Jörgen Spital there are one hundred and thirty, and a few in another hospital in the town. This disease is generally supposed to be incurable. About twenty-five per cent. die in the course of the year. The chaplain, a burley, good-looking man, was in his canonicals, and about to bury a recently deceased patient on our arrival; he descanted on the horrors of the place.

With these I became personally acquainted on the arrival of Dr. L——, the physician of the establishment.

"Now, gentlemen, if you please," said that functionary, putting on a blouse of black serge; "but I warn you it is a terrible sight."

Well, thought I to myself, I will go notwithstanding. The best antidote to the imaginary ills of this life, is to become acquainted with the real ones.

Walking along the spacious corridors, we first entered a room devoted to male cases. Here, as in all the other rooms, there were six beds. I conversed with one man. This case was not yet at a bad stage. He had suffered much hardship in his youth as a seaman, was often wet, and badly fed withal. By dint of industry, he became owner of a jagt, and he said he hoped to get out again and be well enough to take the command of it.

Another man in a bed close by was affected with the smooth leprosy. He attributed it to his having slept in the same bed with a man affected with the disease. He was worn to the bone, and his face and body were blotched and copper-coloured. But before pursuing our melancholy walk, I will just glance at a small tract which has been published by the Government in respect to this foul and mysterious disease, which, after having been driven out of the other countries of Europe, still

holds its ground on the sea-coast of Norway, especially from Stavanger northwards.

There are two sorts of leprosy, which are so very dissimilar in their outward symptoms, that one would hardly imagine that they are the same disease; the one is called the knotted leprosy, the other the smooth leprosy. The first indications of the poison being in the system are lassitude and stiffness in the limbs. The body feels unusually heavy and disinclined to exertion. Sharp pains rack the frame, especially when it is warm, or on the eve of a change of weather. Cold shudderings also supervene, succeeded presently by fever; together with pains in the head, thirst and loss of appetite. All this is accompanied by general listlessness and depression of spirits. Another symptom is a strong inclination to sleep, though sleep brings no refreshment to the limbs.

In knotted leprosy, red spots and sores break out upon the body, especially on the face, which becomes much swollen. These are not accompanied with pain, and often disappear again; but with a new attack of fever they re-appear, and

at last become permanent. They now grow larger and larger—some of the knots attain the size of a hazel nut—and are generally of a yellow-brown colour, with occasionally a tint of blue. They are most frequent on the arms, hands, and face, but most of all about the eyebrows, which fall off in consequence. After a period of time—which is shorter or longer as the case may be—pain is felt in these knots, and they then either turn into regular sores, or become covered with a brown crust. The eyes, mouth, and throat are next attacked, and the eye-sight, breathing and swallowing are affected.

In smooth leprosy, the symptoms are large blisters and white spots, together with great pain and tenderness in various parts of the body. These vesicles are from the bigness of a hazel-nut to that of a hen's egg, and are filled with a watery fluid. They are situated about the elbows and knees, occasionally under the sole of the foot, and elsewhere, and soon burst. The spots, which in the smooth leprosy occur on the body, are not brown, as in the knotted leprosy, but white, and of

a larger size, sometimes being as big as a man's hand; they are covered with white scales. The pain and tenderness which occur in this kind of leprosy gradually disappear, and are followed by utter absence of feeling. At this stage fire or the knife can be applied to the parts diseased without the patient feeling it in the least. A large portion of the body can be thus affected. The patient now begins to get thin, his skin is dry, and his countenance distorted. He can't shut his eyes, and he is not able to bring his lips together, so as to cover the teeth; besides this, the toes and fingers become contracted and rot off.

Curiously enough symptoms of both these horrible phases of a most loathsome disorder occur in one and the same person; in that case the knotted leprosy occurs first, and the knots gradually vanishing, the smooth leprosy supervenes.

This frightful malady has been ascertained to be hereditary, that is to say, it can be transmitted by either parent to their offspring. At first the children seem to be quite healthy, but they conceal within their system the hidden germs of the

complaint, which may at any time break out. Sometimes such children never do betray the presence of the poison, certain defective sanitary conditions being necessary for its development. But, notwithstanding, the disease may come out in the third generation. The most favourable circumstances for its development are an irregular way of life, defective clothing, bad lodging or diet, want of personal cleanliness, and mental anxiety. Under such circumstances, persons who have no hereditary tinge may take the complaint. It is not contagious in the strict sense of the word, but experience seems to show that persons who live in intercourse with leprous persons are very prone to become so themselves. A remarkable illustration of this occurred in Nord-Fjord. The owners of a gaard took the leprosy, and died. The farm was inherited by another family, who became infected with the disease, and died of it. A third family, who succeeded to the dwelling, also perished of the malady. On this, the owner of the house burnt it down.

The Government authorities finally recommend, as a means of getting rid of this dreadful disease,

personal and household cleanliness, proper apparel and lodging, wholesome diet (especially abstinence from half-rotten fish), moderation, particularly in the consumption of spirituous liquors; and, above all, they deprecate intermarriage among those so affected. The present number of lepers in Norway is two thousand and fifty odd, or about one in every seven thousand.

But to proceed with our walk through the hospital. In another ward set apart for males, I addressed a lump of what did not look like humanity, and asked how old he was. The answer was sixteen. He looked sixty. His voice —oh heavens! to think that the human voice divine could have become degraded to that hoarse grating, snuffling sound, the dry husk of what it ought to be!

Close by this case was a man whose face was swollen immensely, and over the brows huge knots and folds of a dark tint congregated together. His face looked more like a knotted clump in the bole of a tree than a human countenance. Sitting on a bed in another room was a boy whose face was

literally eaten through and through, and honeycombed as if by malignant cancer. Nobody can witness all this without realizing to himself more completely the power of Him who could cure it with a mere touch.

Crossing the passage, I saw a nice, pretty little girl playing about.

"She is all right at present," said the doctor, "but both her sisters showed it at her age, and her parents died of it. She is here to be taken care of."

On the women's side, one of the first cases that caught my attention was an old woman with the septum of the nose gone, and groaning with intense agony. Near her was a woman whose toes and fingers had disappeared, and for the present the complaint was quiescent. Indeed, one of the not least frightful symptoms of the disease is, that after a toe or finger is gone the sore heals up, but suddenly breaks out afresh higher up the limb. Unlike a person in an adjoining bed, who shrieked out for fear she should be touched—so sensitive was her flesh—this poor thing had lost all sense

of feeling. When I touched her, at the doctor's request, she could feel nothing.

One blue-eyed girl, with a fair skin and well combed hair, looked well in the face, but the doctor said her body was in a terrible state.

As I walked round the room, I observed another young woman, stretched on a bed in the corner, with dark luxuriant hair—very un-Norwegian in tint—and with peculiarly bright flashing eyes, with which she gazed at me steadfastly.

"Come hither," said the doctor to me; "shut your eyes, Bergita."

The poor thing gave a faint smile, and slightly moved her lids; but this was all. She will never shut those eyes again, perhaps, not even in death.

In another bed was a woman with her teeth uncovered and lips apart.

"Now, mother, try and shut your lips."

A tremulous movement of the lower jaw followed, but the muscles would not work; the disease had destroyed the hinges, and there she lay, mouth open, a spectacle of horror.

In some cases—indeed, very many—when the

disease has seriously set in, it throws a white film over the iris of the eye, the pupil becomes contracted, the ball loses its colour, becomes a whitish mass, and gradually rots out of the socket. Each patient had a religious book by his side, and some sat on the bed or by it reading. They all seemed unrepining at their lot. One poor woman wept tears of gladness when I addressed a word or two of consolation to her. Indeed, the amount of pain felt by these poor sufferers is very small in comparison with what might have been expected from the marks of the fell talons imprinted on their frames. The doctor said they were chiefly carried off at last by hectic fever. Scurvy ointment is used in many cases, frequent cupping in others. One poor woman, with a leg like an elephant's, so deformed and shapeless was it, declined amputation. And there she will go on, the excessive sensitiveness to pain succeeded by an utter anæsthetic state, and one extremity rotting off after another, till she is left a mere blotched trunk, unless a merciful death relieve her before.

One poor woman had been afflicted for no less

than fifty years; her parents, if I remember rightly, were free from the malady, but her grandfather and grandmother had suffered from it. But we have seen enough of this melancholy place. It is a satisfaction to know that, at all events, although the disease cannot be cured by medicine or any other remedy, yet as much is done as possible to alleviate its miseries. The surgeon and chaplain are daily in attendance; abundance of active young women—not old gin-drinking harridans—discharge the office of nurses. The diet is much better than these people would obtain at home. I examined the spacious kitchens, and learned that meat is served thrice a-week to the patients, not to mention soups, puddings, &c. It has been asserted that the disease has lately been on the increase in Norway, but this statement is based most likely on insufficient data.

In the rest of Europe, Scotland especially, to judge from all accounts, it was at one time as bad as it is now in this country. Neither was it confined to the lower classes. Robert Bruce died of it. But as it is now almost, if not altogether,

exterminated in Scotland, there seems no reason why, if the advice of the Government above-mentioned is followed, it should not also die out in Scandinavia. In other respects, the population is healthy and strong, and not affected by goître or any of the usual mountain complaints.

We now took leave of the doctor; my friend, the German physician, who was specially interested in the effect produced on the sight by the disease, appointed the next day for a microscopic examination of some of the patients' eyes in early stages of the disorder. It may be as well to state that Professor Danielson has published a work illustrating by plates the progress of the disorder. Inoculation is also about to be tried as a method of cure, it having been used with success in this country in another disease, many symptoms of which, to a non-professional observer at least, are identical in appearance with those above described.

"Farewell!" said the doctor; "I have shown you a sad spectacle. I am sorry I can't converse with you in your own language. But the next generation will all speak English. It has just been

proposed in the Storthing that, in the middle schools, less Latin shall be taught, and English made a necessary branch of education."

Before leaving Bergen I visited the museum, under the auspices of the very obliging curator, Dr. Korn.

Here is a specimen of a new kind of starfish (Beryx Borealis), discovered by Asbjörnsen. The only habitat yet known of this animal is the Sörfjord. The Glesner Regalicus was also here. It is found in very deep water, and so rarely that, in three hundred years, only two or three specimens had been met with.

Some embryo whales of different degrees of maturity were also preserved in spirits; specimens of these delicate little monsters are not, I believe, to be found in any other museum of Europe. The Strix Funerea, or Hawk Owl, such as I shot in the Malanger, with its beautiful black and white plumage, was also to be seen. Especially beautiful was the Anas Stellaris from beyond the North Cape.

The usual assortment of old Runic calendars

and other mementoes of ancient days were not wanting: not to mention one of those enigmatical Jette gryde (fairy pots) with which the vulgar have connected all sorts of stories. It is composed of two parts, a mortar-shaped cavity in stone, and in this a loose, round cannon-ball sort, also of stone. Here were evidently cause and effect. A loose stone happening to be brought by the stream into a depression in the rocky bed of the torrent, by the action of water becomes itself round, after the manner of a marble, and makes its resting-place round too. The countenances of people who live continually together are often observed to become like. In the same way the perforated and rounded stones which are formed by trituration in the channels of the brooks on the Scottish borders are still termed, says Scott, by the vulgar, fairy cups and dishes.

Before leaving Bergen, I must not omit to record an incident which really speaks much for the good-nature of these people.

"Will you tell me, sir," said I, accosting a jolly, bearded gentleman, in the street, "which is the best bookseller in Bergen?"

"Certainly, sir; come this way, I will show you."

We entered the shop of the bookseller, whose snuffling, sobbing method of talk convinced me at once that he was a Dane. The language is a nerveless, flabby sing-song, gasped out with bated breath. The Norwegian speaks out like a man, and with a pith and marrow in his pronunciation worthy of the rugged power with which one always associates in idea the name of Norway.

The pale bibliopole, after carefully shutting the door, which I had purposely left open—so close and oppressive was the atmosphere of the unventilated shop—fumbled about for a little time, and then discovered that the book I wanted was out of print.

"Oh! never mind," said the stranger, "I have got a copy, which is very much at your service."

And in spite of my protestations, this amiable gentleman, whom I afterwards discovered to be Professor C——, an author of some repute, conducted me to his house, placed refreshments before

me, and compelled me to take the book, the cost of which was considerable. Indeed, all books in Norway are very dear, which may account for the fewness of readers.

Two matters of considerable importance stirred Bergen to its innermost core while I was there. What do you think they were, reader? Gas has been introduced, and to-night is the first night of lighting it. What a number of people are moving about to see it, as we go on board the steamer *Jupiter*, bound for Hamburg. The other incident was productive of no less ferment. Ole Bull, the prince of fiddlers, the Amphion of the American wilds, sick apparently of combining the office of leader of a colony, and musician-in-chief to the new community, has just returned to this, his native place, and is about to give a concert, to inaugurate his assumption of his new office of director of the Bergen Theatre.

CHAPTER XVI.

The safest day in the year for travelling—A collision—Lighthouses on the Norwegian coast—Olaf the Holy and the necromancers—The cathedral at Stavanger—A Norwegian M.P.—Broad sheets—The great man unbends—Jæderen's Rev—Old friends at Christiansand Too fast—The Lammer's schism—Its beneficial effects—Roman Catholic Propagandism—A thievish archbishop—Historical memoranda at Frederickshal—The Falls of the Glommen—A department of woods and forests established in Norway—Conflagrations—A problem, and how it was solved—Author sees a mirage—Homewards.

In the old coaching days it used to be said the safest day in the year to travel by the Tantivy was the day after an upset. The same will hold good, thought I, of steamers, as I heard an animated conversation on board, how that last voyage it was all but a case of *Norge* v. *Bergen* (alluding to a collision between those two steamers, when the former went down), and how the *Viken*, Govern-

ment steamer, would have been utterly cut down, and sunk, had it not been for the presence of mind of the *Jupiter* captain; how, moreover, a fierce newspaper war was going on in consequence, and the Government had ordered an inquiry.

Sooth to say, the navigation of this coast by night is very dangerous. Lord Dufferin, I think, says there are no lighthouses. He is wrong; there are more than twenty. But what are these among so many shoals, islands, narrow channels, ins and outs, as this coast exhibits?

"Yonder," said a Norwegian gentleman on board, "is the Skratteskjaer (skerry of shrieks)." This spot takes its name from a tragic event of which it was the scene many hundred years ago. Olaf the Holy, being resolved to get rid of the Seidemaend (magicians and necromancers), who then abounded in Norway, made a quantity of them drunk, and, in that condition, set fire to the house where they were assembled, and made a holocaust of them. Eywind, however, a noted warlock, escaped through the chimney-hole; but afterwards he, with three hundred others, were caught, and

chained down on that skeïry, which is covered at high water. As the tide rose, the shrieks of the victims pierced the air; but the royal executioner was inexorable.

Crossing the mouth of the Buknfjord, we stopped for half-an-hour at Stavanger, where I had an opportunity of examining the cathedral, which really exhibits some fine pieces of early Gothic. The nave was built in 1115. The verger was profoundly ignorant of all architecture, and so were some Norwegian gentlemen who accompanied me. What they chiefly attended to was a plaster model of Christ, after Thorwaldsen, and some tasteless modern woodwork. The pulpit is two hundred years old.

We here shipped a deputy, on his way to the Storthing now sitting at Christiania. He was a very staid person, who evidently considered that he was called upon to set the passengers an edifying example of superior intelligence and unmoved gravity. I heard that he had formerly been a simple bonder, but was now a thriving merchant. Perhaps I shall best

describe him by saying that his parchment visage reminded me of a Palimpsest, whence a secular composition had been erased to make room for a sanctimonious homily; but, at the corners of the parchment, some of the old secular characters still peeped out unerased. Next me, after dinner, sat a sharp young Bergenser. To while away the time, I asked him if he could recite me any popular songs or rhymes. He responded to the call at once, and produced a couple of broad sheets from his pocket-book, containing two favourite old Norsk ballads; one of which was the famed "Bonde i Brylups Garen;" the other was, "The Courtship of Ole and Father Mikkel's Daughter."

The deputy's attention I observed to be caught by our conversation, and he smiled gravely. Only think of a Storthingsman, clad in a sober suit of brown, whose mind was supposed to be full of the important business of the country, listening to such trifles. Gude preserve ye! Mr. ——, what childish stuff. Nevertheless, he had once been a child, and a peasant-child, too; and there was a time when he sat on the maternal knee, and heard

the lullabies of his country. Nay, he went so far as to recite a country jingle himself. It was what we call in England a Game rhyme. Seven children are dancing round in a ring; suddenly the ring is broken, and each one endeavours to seize a partner.

Shear shearing oats,
The sheaves who shall bind?
My true love he shall do it,
Where is he to find?

I saw him yestere'en
In the clear light of the moon,
You take yours, I take mine,
One is left standing alone.

He uttered this in a low tone of voice, as if he was heartily ashamed of the infantine reminiscence. Human nature shrunk again into itself; the deputy remembered that his countrymen's eyes were upon him, and he must be careful of betraying any further weakness of the sort. One or two Norwegians who had overheard the conversation, looked with no little astonishment at their representative, and with a somewhat indignant expression of countenance at me, doubtful, apparently, whether

I had not of *malice prepense* been taking a rise out of a Norwegian Storthingsman.

As we passed Jaederen's Rev (reef), a long, low flat shore of some miles in extent, we had the usual storm, which stirred up the bilgewater to an offensive degree, and in consequence thereof, the wrath of a doctor on board, who wore yellow kids and much jewellery, but who was not half a bad fellow in spite of his foppery.

As I sat by the open window of the hotel, at Christiansand, two burly fellows in the singular Saetersdal costume, greeted me. In them I at once recognised two peasants with whom I had had speech at Valle. They had come down to meet the new parson and his family, whom they would drive up on the morrow on the way to his expectant parishioners. The good fellows were mightily pleased when I handed them some Bayersk Öl out of the window. A Norwegian student who was with me heard them deliberating whether they should not treat the strange Carl to a glass of something; but they apparently thought it would be taking too great a liberty, and presently made

their bow, carrying all sorts of greetings to my friends in their distant home.

Next day I started to Moss, in the Christiania Fjord, by the steamer of that name. She was built in Scotland, and goes sixteen miles an hour, more than double the pace of the Government steamers, which are proverbially slow. Many of the Norwegians are frightened of her, and say she will break her back.

There was an intelligent young Norwegian on board who is resident in America. He tells me that the Lammers' schism has done no little good, in a religious point of view, by awaking the State clergy from the torpor into which they had sunk; and there is every symptom of a new spiritual life being infused into the community. Things, he says, have hitherto been at a low ebb in this respect throughout the country. Among the better classes there is no such thing as family prayers, they seldom look at their Bibles. At Arendal and Christiania private meetings have been set on foot for prayer and reading of the Scriptures. A Moravian clergyman, who was the first

to establish gatherings of this kind, and who has laboured diligently in this line for some years, has lately received a subvention from the Government without his solicitation.

In Sweden, the proposal to abolish the law by which Dissenters may not reside in that country, has lately been thrown out in the Chambers, Count P—— having described in pathetic language the danger likely to ensue upon such a change, and being backed in his opposition by 280 clergy.

In Norway, on the contrary, as in England, all religions, provided they do not trangress the laws of morality and social order, are tolerated. The Roman Catholics take advantage of this, and are busy in a quiet way making proselytes. The widow of the late King Bernadotte is understood to give her countenance to their exertions. Contributions are also received from Belgium and France, and two French ladies conduct a school on Romish principles at Christiania. One of the two Romish priests there is a born Norwegian.

My travelling companion also informs me of a curious discovery made lately by Lange, the author of a *History of Norwegian Monasteries*.

It has always been supposed that the precious treasures which adorned the tomb of St. Olaf, in the Cathedral of Trondjem, were stolen by King Christian the Second, and that the ship conveying the ill-gotten booty sank near Christiansand.

At Amsterdam, however, from whence Lange has just returned, he found incontestable documentary evidence that the Archbishop of Trondjem was himself the thief. He fled to Amsterdam, got into debt, and the jewels were sold and dispersed.

Landing at Moss, I passed through a wretchedly ugly country to Frederickshal. There is nothing in the place worth seeing, except the fortress and the statue to the patriotic burgher, Peder Colbjörnsen. Some of the houses are far beyond the average of many of the Norwegian towns; to which detracting people might be inclined to apply the old description of Granville:—

Granville, grand vilain,
Une église, et un moulin,
On voit Granville tout à plein.

A small enclosure outside the fortress marks the spot where the Swedish madman was sacrificed by one of his own soldiers while occupied in the siege. The monument, however, has utterly disappeared. A new one is talked of.

Thence I posted to Sarpsborg, to see the mighty falls of the Glommen, with the beautiful suspension-bridge swung over them. Above it the huge river winds away its vast coils into the distant mountains, bringing down the timbers which once grew upon their sides. But the wastefulness of the people in timber is now beginning to tell. Norway is at length about to start a Forstwesen similar to that of Germany, and Asbjörnsen is now employed by the Government in travelling through Bavaria, for the purpose of investigating the admirable regulations there in force in the Department of Woods and Forests.

As usual, there has been a fire in Sarpsborg. Half the town is destroyed, and presents a terrible

scene of desolation.* A new church, just completed, was saved by a miracle. At Drammen, on the other side of the Fjord, one or two fires have also been sweeping away a vast quantity of buildings. The conflagration was visible at Uddevalla, near Gottenburg, about one hundred and fifty miles off.

My slumbers that night, at the waterside inn, whence the steamer was to start next morning, were interrupted by an odd sort of visitation. Two bulky Norwegian gentlemen were ushered into the bed-room, puffing away at cigars, and forthwith prepared to occupy the other bed. By what Procrustean process it could possibly be made to contain two such ponderosities was a problem now to be solved. However, one of them got in first, and retreated as far as he could into its recesses. The other followed, and managed to squeeze himself into the space left by the side of his companion. Many jocular remarks were let fall between them,

* According to the newspapers, a great part of the capital itself has just met with a like fate.

and one remark especially seemed to tickle the risibilities of the larger and fatter man to such an extent that he shook again, and the bed also. Suddenly I heard a loud smash, and looking up, found that the bottom of the bed, though equal to their dead weight in a quiescent state, was unable to bear the momentum of their laughter-shaken frames, and had given way, both gentlemen falling through on to the floor.

For some time they had great difficulty in escaping from their awkward predicament. This, however, was at length effected, and for the rest of the night the floor was their couch—the floor which they had used as a spittoon; but this did not seem in the least to interfere with their comfort.

Having nothing to call me to the capital, I determined to catch the Kiel steamer that afternoon in the Christiania Fjord, where I saw for the first time one of those remarkable mirages so common in the seas of Scandinavia, which are supposed to have given rise to the legends of phantom-ships,

which prevail along the coast. The next day we were steaming over a smooth sea, along the low coast of our forefathers, the Jutes, and the day after shot by train through the heathy flats whence issued England's sponsors, the Angles.

THE END.

SKETCH MAP
OF
NORWAY.
English Miles
NORTHERN OCEAN
Lofoden Isles
Helgeland Isles
Vest Fjord
Arctic Circle
Folden Fjord
Trondjem
Christiansund
Aalesund
Stadland
Bergen
Hardanger Fjord
Sogne Fjord
Fille Fjord
CHRISTIANIA
Christiansand
Stavanger
Egersund
Drontheim
Levanger
Hitteren
Ostersund
Ramas
Roraas
Lerdal
Kongsberg
Kongsvinger
Arendal
Laurvig
Frederickshall
Fredericstad
Halden
Carlstad
Orebro
Westeras
Upsala
STOCKHOLM
Nykioping
Sudertelia
Soderhamn
Hernosand
Umea
Pitea
Lulea
Torneå
Uleaborg
Kajana
Christinestad
Abo
Helsingfors
Sidle
Alands I.
GULF OF BOTHNIA
GULF OF FINLAND
Revel
Dago
SWEDEN
FINLAND
RUSSIAN LAPLAND
NORWAY
Varanger Fiord
North Cape
Alten
Kautokeino
Kaafiord
Tanen R.
Muonio R.
Kengis R.
Torneå R.
Kalix R.
Lulea R.
Pitea R.
Umea R.
Angerman R.
Indal R.
Ljusne R.
Dal R.
Klar R.
Gotha R.
Glommen R.
Drammen R.
Skien R.
Nid R.
Gaula R.
Namsen R.
Ranen R.
Vefsen R.
Ume R.
Skellefte R.
Sulitelma
Saltdalen
Ranen
Vefsen
Ume
Skellefte
Lulea
Pitea
Torneå
Uleaborg
Kajana
Christinestad
Abo
Helsingfors
Sidle
Alands I.
Upsala
Westeras
Carlstad
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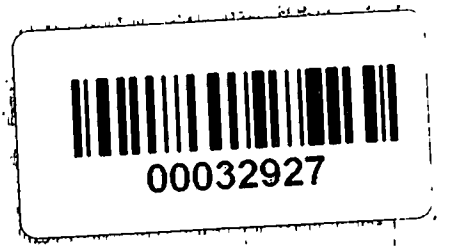
Nykioping
Sudertelia
Soderhamn
Hernosand
Umea
Ostersund
Drontheim
Levanger
Hitteren
Ramas
Roraas
Lerdal
Kongsberg
Kongsvinger
Arendal
Laurvig
Frederickshall
Fredericstad
Halden
Christiansand
Stavanger
Egersund
Aalesund
Stadland
Christiansund
Bergen
Hardanger Fjord
Sogne Fjord
Fille Fjord
Folden Fjord
Helgeland Isles
Lofoden Isles
Vest Fjord
Arctic Circle
Gulf of Bothnia
Gulf of Finland
Revel
Dago
Sweden
Finland
Russian Lapland
Norway
Northern Ocean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